



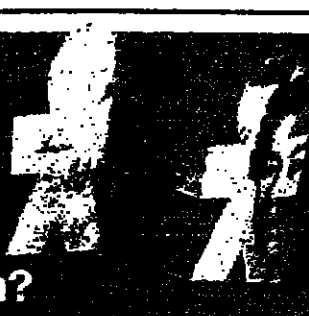
THE TABLOID

Lauren Bacall:
it's never
too late



THE TABLOID

EDUCATION+
24 PAGES WITH APPOINTMENTS
Can economic success
be bought in the classroom?



COMMENT

**In defence
of fox
hunting**



Taxpayers buy the Queen a new yacht

Christian Wolmar
Westminster Correspondent

The Government yesterday committed £60m of state money to a replacement for the Royal Yacht *Britannia* in what appeared to be a bid to wrong-foot Labour and win the support of those voters who support the monarchy.

Michael Portillo, the Secretary of State for Defence, told MPs that he rejected all suggestions of private finance sponsors, arguing that "it is the duty of the state to support the monarchy" and said that the vessel "would be a symbol of the Crown, the Kingdom and its maritime traditions". The annual running cost, estimated to be around £4m per year, would come from the defence budget.

Labour, caught unaware by the surprise announcement initially failed to

vote. Mr Portillo also made a play for support from jingoistic Euro-sceptics by promising that the ship would be built in a British yard, knowing that this was a commitment which breaches European competition rules as they specify that all major contracts must be open to bidders throughout the European Union. Mr Portillo justified this by vaguely saying it was a matter of security and "it was a royal ship" and promised that if the European Commission launched a legal challenge, he would oppose it.

While the announcement met with jubilant support on the government benches, Labour was divided, with several MPs, including Kate Hoey and Andrew Faulds, expressing full support while Dennis Skinner and Alan Williams opposed it. Mr Williams said he could not understand the sense of priorities which diverts £60m away from social services and said it was "a symbol of extravagance and irrelevance".

The Liberal Democrats gave unqualified backing to the scheme while the leader of the SNP, Alex Salmond, described it as foolish.

Mr Portillo admitted that the ship would be more of a mobile hotel than a form of transport, since the Royal Family "travel by air". It would have to be "prestigious" to impress foreign visitors. He justified the cost "not in terms of pounds, shillings and pence, but on how we feel about ourselves".

Unlike *Britannia*, which had a notional role as a military hospital ship, the new ship would have no ostensible military purpose. The Government rejected the plan to make it double as a training ship. There had been opposition in the Ministry of Defence to continue paying for a ship which had no military purpose but this has been overridden by Mr Portillo for purposes of political expediency.

There would be room for a helicopter pad, but Mr Portillo rejected suggestions that there should be space for bicycles in line with the "cycling Royals" approach favoured by Continental monarchs.

The new yacht would enter service in 2002. *Britannia* itself is due to be scrapped after it finishes its final tour of duty in Hong Kong later this year. While Mr Portillo said he would consider suitable offers for a suitably prestigious use for *Britannia* in the public interest here in the UK, he would prefer to see it scrapped rather than allow it to deteriorate.

Nick Grainger, director of the Shipbuilding and Shiprepairers Association said there would be nine possible British yards where the ship could be built. The leading contenders are thought to be Harland and Wolff in Belfast, VSEL in Barrow and Yarrow Shipbuilders on the Clyde.



Bon voyage: The royal yacht *Britannia* leaving Portsmouth for the last time

Photograph: Tom Pilstow

Saddam's son was shot to avenge dead Iraqi general

EXCLUSIVE by Patrick Cockburn

The attempted assassination of Uday, the son of President Saddam Hussein, was carried out as part of a feud by the family of a senior Iraqi general killed by the Iraqi leader for criticising the regime.

The *Independent* has learned from an Iraqi source that the leader of the plot was Ra'ad al-Hazaa, a former army officer in his thirties, who is the nephew of General Omar al-Hazaa. The general, a member of the same clan as Saddam Hussein, was executed in 1990.

The assassination bid took place in Baghdad on 12 December last year when Uday, 32, the notoriously brutal son of the Iraqi leader, was driving through the city. Opposition groups say he was hit by four bullets, one of which is still lodged in his spine. Last week the French government officially turned down an Iraqi request that Uday be permitted to enter a hospital in France. The request implies that Uday's wounds are serious.

The attack was previously claimed by al-Dawa, a militant Shia group, with a history of trying to assassinate Iraqi leaders. They are believed to have been involved in the logistics and organisation of the plot, but the driving force was Ra'ad al-Hazaa and some of his relations, who were able to acquire details of Uday's movements because they moved in the same elite circles.

The feud which led to the attack on Uday had its origin in the killing of General Hazaa seven years ago. Like Saddam Hussein he came from the northern city of Tikrit and was a divisional commander in the regular army. During the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s General Hazaa retired, but was increasingly critical of the Iraqi

leader. Arrested in 1990 he was executed, reportedly after his tongue was cut out. His house in Baghdad was demolished.

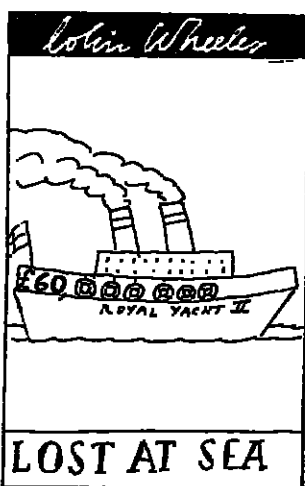
Uday is not known to have played any part in the death of the general. But he is the most visible member of the regime in Baghdad, famed for his womanising and drunkenness. The would-be assassins are said to have received information from "Lubna", a girlfriend of Uday. After the assassination bid



Uday Hussein: Seriously injured in feud gun-attack

those who had taken part fled to Iran. The Iranian government had no prior knowledge of the plot and continues to deny that the men are in Iran in the face of an official Iraqi demand, through the UN, that they be handed over. Worried that they might be secretly returned, some of the group made contact with friends abroad to put pressure on the Iranian government not to give them up to Iraq.

In order to distance Iran from the assassination, al-Dawa, based in Tehran, claimed the attack from Damascus. If Uday is paralysed, his brother Qusai, head of the security services, becomes the heir apparent. Brutality led to attack, page 9



indicate whether it would support the project, but later said that public finance should be limited, suggesting that it might favour some private-sector involvement. The decision to go ahead with a replacement was made on Tuesday by a Cabinet committee with the backing of the Prime Minister. Mr Portillo stressed the decision was the Government's and not that of the Queen who would contribute "to the furnishings and fittings of the State Rooms and Royal Apartments".

Labour said the decision was made for electioneering reasons. A senior source said last night: "It is amazing that this £60m has had to come out of contingencies. If this had been a serious debate about the need for a replacement, they would have consulted with the Opposition. Instead, they've tried to catch us out on public spending." However, the shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown's golden rule would stand: "no commitment for any new spending, royal or not royal".

The Tories who fear their own one-party state



by Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

John Major was asked at a London breakfast meeting with business leaders yesterday how he reacted to the widespread view that it was time for a change of government, for the good of democracy.

The Prime Minister gave a polished politician's reply, brushing the question aside. But privately, other Tory MPs are worried about just that. Away from the microphones, they are warning that the re-election of the Conservatives for a fifth term could damage democracy - and even lead to civil unrest by disaffected voters.

Other Tory MPs warn that if Labour is defeated again, the arrogance of the Conservative leadership would be aggravated, and Tony Blair and Gordon Brown would be "ripped to shreds" in an orgy of Labour self-recrimination.

Speaking to *The Independent* on conditions of strict anonymity, one senior government backbencher said: "We have got to work hard at renewing our election mandate, but will it be good for British democracy? I doubt it. If the Conservatives

win, as on the arguments they ought, then I believe they have not yet even begun to see the depths of unpopularity to which the party would sink thereafter. With the real prospect of civil unrest to follow.

"We had in Thatcher's day the poll tax riots. You would be encouraging, particularly amongst the young, increased enthusiasm for extra-parliamentary activity."

"I think that each time the Tories have won, particularly in 1992, their victory - and this is not their fault - their victory led to the lack of respect for members of the system, the lack of interest in using Parliament as an institution."

"There has been a growth of extra-parliamentary activity of one form or another: passive,

non-passive, violent, non-violent, whatever it may be."

One MP said parliamentary democracy became parliamentary dictatorship when 51 dictated to 49. That became "insufferable" if the minority never got a chance of taking over the levers of power.

Another Tory backbencher said: "Quite apart from Labour's frustration after a fifth defeat, we have to ask about the disenchanted voters - and how they would feel about never getting a shot in the football game."

He also wondered what impact another win would have on Government arrogance; shown by blanket attacks on the minimum wage, the unpunished incompetence of the way in which the BSE beef crisis had been handled, and the current attempt to introduce draconian bugging and burglary powers through the Police Bill.

"If we cannot expect a Conservative government to defend our freedoms, what is the point? We are now supposed to be obedient to the views and judgements of a very narrow presidential cabinet system."



he said. One MP said it was one of the basic assumptions of the unwritten British constitution that, "from time to time the government will change".

The MPs' anxieties reflect a

growing sense of Westminster disquiet about the consequences of a fifth Tory term of office. Robin Cook, the shadow Foreign Secretary, has already warned of the risks of a one-party state, and of the Tories' belief in their "divine right to rule", arguing that they would take another win as a mandate to do whatever they liked to the welfare state.

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Andrew Marr, page 17

QUICKLY

Striking it rich

Bahamas-based Joe Lewis has bought a £40m, 25 per cent stake in Glasgow Rangers football club - Britain's biggest single investment in football. Chairman David Murray will contain a controlling interest in the club. Page 26

Free to speed

Motorists in many parts of the country are speeding illegally because the police cannot afford to prosecute drivers caught by roadside cameras. Page 5

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significant shorts

Murderer left 'autograph' on body of Naomi Smith

Naomi Smith, the schoolgirl found murdered in a children's park, had a crucial "DNA autograph" on her mutilated body, a jury heard yesterday. Tests showed that saliva found in a bite on 15-year-old Naomi's body fitted the DNA profile of Edwin Hopkins, 20, Birmingham Crown Court was told. Mr Hopkins had an "incredibly rare" DNA profile found only in one in every 250 million people, said Colman Treacy QC, for the prosecution.

His teeth were also a perfect match for the bite mark - and his sister, Julie, gave police vital evidence about his whereabouts on the night of Naomi's death, said Mr Treacy as he outlined the prosecution case to the jury of six men and six women. Hopkins, of Ansley Common, near Nuneaton, Warwickshire, denies murder.

Naomi vanished after popping out to post a letter in her home village of Ansley Common in September 1995. Her throat had been cut and she had been sexually assaulted.

"It was probably better than if the killer had left his autograph. Because what was found in the area around the breast provides some of the most valuable evidence for the prosecution in this case," The trial continues.

The demon eyes have it

The Conservative Party's poster campaign featuring the "demon eyes" has beaten Wonderbra to win the latest "most talked about advert" accolade, a survey revealed yesterday.

The pre-election campaign, devised by the M&C Saatchi agency, gained more national press coverage than any other promotion in the last three years. The advertisements, which included pictures of the Labour leader Tony Blair with superimposed red eyes, have topped the poll. Wonderbra was second and Labour's "Same Old Tory Lies" campaign came sixth.

Martin Loat, managing director of Propeller Marketing Communications, which conducted the survey, said: "Like it or loathe it, the Demon Eyes icon was a stunning advertising image that captured the public imagination."

Derek Bentley's sister dies



Iris Bentley, who campaigned tirelessly to clear the name of her brother Derek hanged for the murder of a policeman in 1953, has died.

Aged in her 60s, she had suffered from cancer for some time and recently had an operation for the illness, her solicitors said.

From her home in Wimbledon, south-west London, she spearheaded the 44-year effort to secure a full pardon for her brother who was the

accomplice, not the gunman, in the shooting. The case was dramatised in the film *Let Him Have It*, named after the alleged cry made by Bentley, then aged 19, moments before the murder.

The case will be one of the first to be presented to the Criminal Cases Review Commission for referral to the Court of Appeal when it commences its work in April.

Foster's tower vision fades

Sir Norman Foster's vision of a 1,265ft Millennium Tower on the site of the bomb-damaged Baltic Exchange in the City of London all but evaporated yesterday when English Heritage joined opponents of the glass skyscraper. The tower, which would be Europe's tallest building, was such a "quantum leap" in scale, height and bulk, that it would overwhelm the character of the capital, said Sir Jocelyn Stevens, chairman of English Heritage.

"It would disfigure the skyline. London doesn't need a macho building to establish a place for itself as a world financial centre." The £400m project could only now proceed if the Secretary of State for Environment, John Gummer, overruled his own adviser, English Heritage.

Stephen Goodwin

Grobbelaar friendship turned to hate

A former friend and business partner of the goalkeeper Bruce Grobbelaar admitted he wanted revenge on the footballer after a business deal turned sour, a court heard yesterday.

Chris Vincent agreed with Mr Grobbelaar's counsel, Mr Rodney Klevan QC, that he wanted to ensure the "downfall" of his one-time friend whom he felt had let him down over the collapse of his safari company Mondoro.

Mr Klevan asked: "In a flash your friendship turned to hatred?" Mr Vincent said: "Yes sir." The barrister continued: "It is woe betide anybody who crosses Chris Vincent - would that be a good epitaph for you?" "Reasonably," said Mr Vincent.

Mr Vincent was being cross-examined at the trial at Winchester Crown Court in which the former Liverpool player Mr Grobbelaar and two former professional footballers, John Fashanu and Hans Segers, are accused of a conspiracy to fix football matches.

He denied a suggestion he had twisted Grobbelaar's account of forecasting matches for a Far East syndicate to make it seem like match-fixing, and rejected claims he had lied in his "James Bond" description of the goalkeeper taking money in a toilet from a fourth defendant on the same charge, a Malaysian businessman, Heng Suan Lim. The trial continues.

Michael Streeter

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people



Sir Peter de la Billiere, clearly angered by MoD position on his book. Photograph: David Giles

Warrior ready for a battle royal with the generals

One of Britain's most decorated warriors, General Sir Peter de la Billiere, was set for a battle royal with the Ministry of Defence last night after an order was issued banning authors of books on the special forces from their former bases.

More than two dozen authors, including the general and Andy McNab, the man behind the Gulf War best-seller *Bravo Two-Zero*, were told they were no longer welcome at social functions, in case they used them as a means of gathering information for new books.

The general, commander of British forces in the Gulf and the most decorated soldier since the Second World War, reacted curiously to the news, with a statement saying he had not received notification of the ban - and he didn't expect it.

"I am aware that the Ministry of Defence will be sending letters to some former members of the UK Special Forces regarding the withdrawal of authority to give them access to UK Special Forces establishments," he said.

"I do not know who they are. Both of my books - *Storm Command* and *Looking For Trouble* - were

cleared by the MoD and the SAS before publication. I have not received and do not expect to receive such a letter."

The MoD confirmed last night that it had "cleared" his books, but a spokesman said clearance was not the same as approval. "We do not want them for security reasons, but we also tell the authors that we would prefer that they did not write about the special forces at all."

"In the past three years, there have been some 35 books about the special services, including 10 best-sellers. There has not been anything like it since the Second World War. We have to ensure the safety of the army still serving, and we have to ensure secrecy. The people who have written about their experiences may well use social functions to gather more information for hungry publishers, we don't want to give them that opportunity."

Sir Peter was director of the SAS from 1978 to 1983. He resigned last year as president of the SAS Regimental Association and is not known for regular attendance at functions.

Steve Boggan and Christopher Bellamy

Marco's Michelin crown falls to young chef

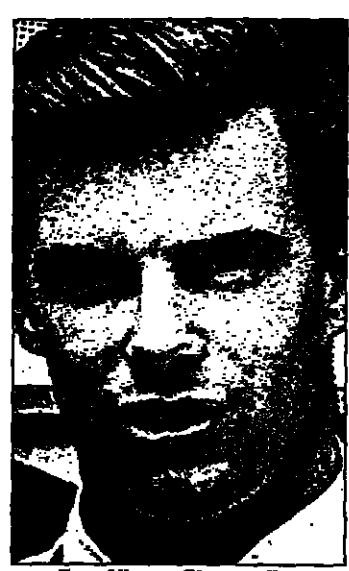
A 26-year-old chef has become the youngest in Britain to win two Michelin stars, beating Marco Pierre White, who won the same accolade aged 27 - and winning his boss £1,000 in the process.

Tom Aikens is the new chef at London's Pied à Terre, one of nine restaurants awarded two stars by *The Michelin 1997 Red Hotel and Restaurant Guide*, published yesterday.

The restaurant's manager, David Moore, was so confident that it would retain its two stars that he made a £1,000 bet with his boss. "He just faxed me from India saying he can't wait to pay up," said Mr Moore yesterday.

Although the restaurant already held two stars, there had been fears that when previous chef Richard Neat left last year, the stars might go with him.

Restaurants to receive the coveted three stars were all in London: La Tante Claire in Chelsea, Marco Pierre White's The Restaurant at the Hyde Park Hotel, and Chez Nico at Ninety Park Lane.



Tom Aikens: Star quality

In what was described by the guide, which contains information on more than 6,000 establishments, as a "strong" performance by British and Irish restaurants, 67 received one star.

Mr Aikens is likely to be busy. The last time the restaurant was awarded two stars, business almost doubled within three months.

Jojo Moyes

Tommy goes back on the shelf

The supermarket shelf-stacker who was plucked from obscurity to lead the cast of the West End musical *Tommy*, will not be returning to Tesco's despite the decision of the show's promoters to end its run.

Audiences have failed to share the delight of the cast, composer Pete Townshend and critics who lavished rave reviews on Townshend's transformation of his 27-year-old rock opera into a family musical.

The show opened last March at the Shaftesbury Theatre, renewing interest in the music of The Who. It also brought stardom for unknown 20-year-old Paul Keating, who auditioned for the show between shifts at Tesco. A spokesman for the show said last night: "Paul is shocked and disappointed like all the cast. But he will not be returning to Tesco. After his performance in *Tommy* he can look forward to a great future as an actor."

After a successful Broadway run it looked set for a lengthy run. Ironically, it has received eight Olivier award nominations, the highest number for any show in the West End.

David Lister

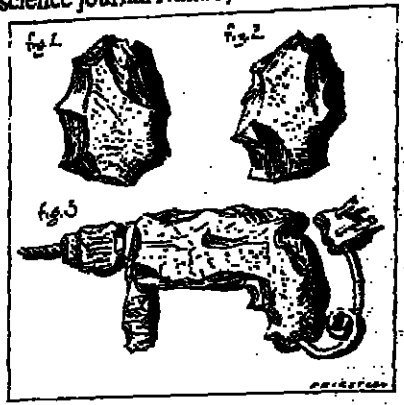
briefing

ARCHAEOLOGY

Low-tech origins of human society discovered

Humans began using stone tools almost 2.6 million years ago, according to examination of archaeological finds, which may be the oldest known artefacts, in a river valley in Ethiopia. The tools were used for chopping and pounding, and are almost 300,000 years older than the previously "oldest known" tools. The new finds mainly consist of flakes of rock with chipped edges, which would have been used for cutting or chopping, and a few "pounded pieces" which would have been shaped by battering, like anvils.

In today's edition of the science journal *Nature*, the archaeologists, led by Sileshi Semaw from Rutgers University in New Jersey, write: "We predict that even older artefacts will be found." But the researchers were able to say little about the hominids who would have made the tools. The earliest human fossil traces, discovered by Lake Turkana in Kenya in 1995, date back more than 4.4 million years. Charles Arthur



EDUCATION

Youngsters lacking direction

Fewer than half of British children can locate London on a map with no place names, according to research carried out by NOP for Microsoft. The survey of nearly 900 children aged eight to 16 also found that only just over a quarter could pinpoint Edinburgh, and 37 per cent could not find Scotland.

Government curriculum advisers said they found the extent of the children's ignorance "disturbing". Geography has been a compulsory part of the national curriculum for children aged eight to 14 since 1991 - voluntary from 14 to 16 - and identifying principal cities, regions and rivers on a map of the United Kingdom is something all 11-year-olds should have covered.

The survey suggests that they are even more at sea outside their own country. Only two in five could identify Germany on a map of Europe with no place names. Three out of five did not know the language spoken in Tokyo and nearly seven out of 10 were stumped when asked Mexico's main language.

SCIENCE

The limits of intelligence

The human brain has virtually reached its evolutionary limits, say scientists. An analysis of the delicate balance between the billions of neurons in our skulls, and the need to supply the axons (which connect them like cables) with blood and fatty insulation shows we can only improve our data processing ability by 20 per cent at most.

The BT research, published in *New Scientist*, found that to expand our thinking ability, the 100 billion neurons in the brain would have to be larger, so they could pass signals more quickly. But that would in turn demand a greater blood supply - which, given the constricted size of the brain cavity, could only be achieved by limiting the growth of the neurons.

A larger skull might allow both more neurons and a bigger blood supply, but transmission of data would be slower. Charles Arthur

CRIME

Zero tolerance pays dividend

An American style "zero tolerance" anti-crime initiative in Scotland was yesterday hailed a success by police chiefs who said it had helped cut offences in the force region to their lowest level in 15 years.

For the past three months Strathclyde Police has been clamping down on minor crimes in the belief that this will reduce the number of more serious offences and reduce public fear. During the first stage of the "Spotlight" initiative more than 200,000 extra police hours were spent on the streets.

During the Strathclyde offensive, 12 offences were spotlighted. Since the start of the start of the scheme crimes of violence, indecency, dishonesty, car theft, and vandalism were down but crime covering drugs, obstructing police in their duties and overall nuisance rose. Jason Bennetto

AGRICULTURE

Gastronomic great leap forward

Scientists have taken a giant leap for gastronomy by growing the highly prized golden chanterelle wild mushroom in a greenhouse. Until now, the fungus has defied all attempts at cultivation and can only be harvested from pine forests.

Large quantities are imported from the United States because it is declining in Europe. The team, led by Eric Danell from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala reported in the science journal *Nature* that they had transferred pine seedlings carrying the fungus into pots in March, 1995. Five fruit-bodies emerged during the following spring and autumn.

The scientists believe their technique could be applied to other endangered species, such as *Tricholoma matsutake*, which is the most valuable mushroom in the world, costing about £60 each.



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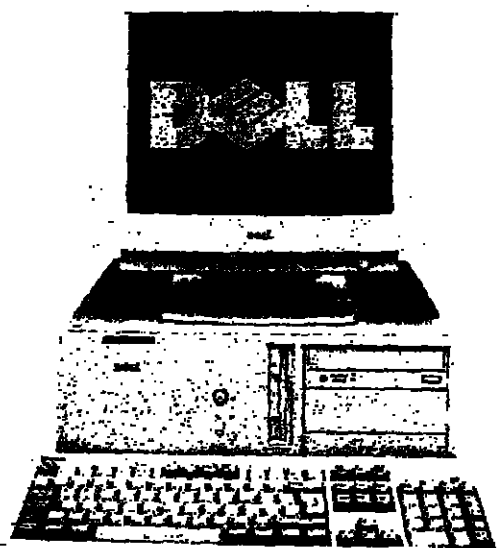
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Caught on film: the camera that always lies

Police admit that motorists are allowed to speed illegally with dummy roadside apparatus

Jason Bennetto and David Garfinkel

Motorists in many parts of the country are being allowed to break the speed limit because the police cannot afford to prosecute drivers caught by roadside cameras, it was disclosed yesterday.

In some cases film has been deliberately removed from cameras and the speed limit set at an artificially high level so that fewer motorists will be caught. In other instances no action has been taken against drivers filmed breaking the speed limit.

Chief constables yesterday appealed for extra money to carry out prosecutions, arguing that the speed cameras were an extremely effective method of reducing road-traffic accidents. They believe convicted motorists should contribute to prosecution costs.

About 30 out of the 45 police forces in England and Wales use speed cameras, fitted at accident trouble spots. They are triggered if a passing vehicle exceeds a set speed. Most drivers are liable to a fixed £40 fine and three licence penalty points, although more serious cases are taken to court.

However, only one in eight

motorists filmed speeding are prosecuted, according to a report published last Wednesday by Lex Service, of the sales and leasing group. For example, in Avon and Somerset the police can only afford to process and prosecute a certain number of motorists so they set their cameras to a higher limit than normal - ensuring that only the very worst law breakers are caught. A spokesman for Avon and Somerset said: "There's no point in photographing motorists we cannot afford to prosecute."

Geoffrey Markham, spokesman on speed enforcement for the Association of Chief Police Officers (Acpo) and Assistant Chief Constable of Essex, explained: "We have to back away from it, and not put film in the camera perhaps, or limit the numbers we process, or put the profile for speeding at too high a level."

"We have to do all sorts of artificial things to remain within our own budgets. But... if a particularly powerful weapon that we have at our disposal is blunted because we are unable to use it in certain parts of the country, that is not a good road-safety message," he told BBC Radio 4's Today programme.

Chief Inspector Jerry Moore, of Essex Police's traffic commission, and an assistant to the Acpo committee examining this



Empty promise: The police speed camera on the London-Essex A127 that residents of Gantshill say has not done its job for three months

Photograph: Brian Harris

issue, said: "In Essex if we could not afford to deal with any more cases we would close down the cameras until the backlog had been dealt with."

He warned: "We don't want motorists to know where they can

speed and where they can't. Our main aim is to reduce the number of road-traffic accidents."

The police want to be paid a percentage of the fixed penalty payments made by speeding motorists, which at present goes

to the Treasury. When cameras were first introduced in 1992 they produced just 300 prosecutions but by 1994 this rose to 20,600.

The Metropolitan Police said they supported the call for ex-

tra funding. A spokesman for Sussex Police said: "It is impossible to do everything so we target known black spots. Where there are problems you have to target your resources as we do not have a bottomless pit

of money." But other forces questioned, including Humber, Hertfordshire, said they prosecuted all motorists caught over the speed limit.

John Bowis, Transport min-

ister, said it was important that cameras should work and that people should be prosecuted. "I'm after a system where the police see that as one of their priorities, and so do implement effective camera work," he said.

Anti-traffic Bill gets amber light

Nicholas Schoon Environment Correspondent

The Government has decided to end hostilities towards a proposed new law which would compel local councils to plan cuts in road traffic.

Anti-road protesters showed their support for the Traffic Reduction Bill in London yesterday by briefly blocking the busy road beside the Houses of Parliament with a sit-down protest.

The Road Traffic Reduction Bill reaches a crucial stage tomorrow, with its second reading in the House of Commons. Its backers, including more than 100 local councils and 220 MPs, believe the Government's change of heart has given their

Bill with a real chance of entering into force.

The legislation would oblige councils to set targets for cutting traffic levels, or cutting the projected growth in the number of cars and lorry journeys. The targets, and the plans to implement them, would have to be drawn up within a year of the Bill becoming law, and they would cover the years 2005 and 2010.

The Private Member's Bill, introduced by Liberal Democrat MP Don Foster, has its vital second reading in the Commons tomorrow. Backers say that if it survives it has a reasonable chance of getting through the Commons stages and the Lords before the general election is called and Parliament dissolved.

The Government has indicated that it will not oppose the Bill, following negotiations with Mr Foster in which he made substantial concessions. In its original version it would have compelled the Secretary of State for Transport to set national targets, something his department could not countenance.

The Bill has backing from the Green Party, Plaid Cymru and Friends of the Earth. Ron Bailey, the veteran Green Party campaigner who wrote it, said: "It's not what we originally intended, but it's a vital step which puts traffic reduction on the legislative agenda for the first time."

Councils would be expected to hit their targets by improving facilities for pedestrians

and cyclists, boosting public transport and refusing planning permission for developments which make people more reliant on cars - out-of-town shopping centres and leisure complexes, for example.

The Department of Transport said its stance would be revealed tomorrow, but the Bill was "moving towards current government policy".

Supporters of the legislation held a rally in Central Hall, followed by a mass lobby of MPs in Parliament. The main justifications for the Bill are that it would cut the growing volume of noise and pollution from traffic, make towns and cities more attractive and curb the demand for new roads. About 2,000

people attended, many with placards, and some sat in the road. They were quickly moved by police, who said there were no arrests and the demonstration was good natured. Dozens of cyclists showed their support by circling Parliament Square.

If the Bill is passed it will be the second major item of "green" legislation brought about through the Private Member's Bill procedure. In 1995 the Home Energy Conservation Act became law - also with the backing of the Liberal Democrats, Friends of the Earth, Plaid Cymru and the Green Party. This compels all councils to outline a strategy to cut energy use in homes in their area by 30 per cent over 10 years.

Cars to come with their own cat's eyes

Charles Arthur Science Editor

Cars will soon come with infrared night vision systems able to pick out people and objects that drivers otherwise might not see, following research by Jaguar.

The new systems would use cameras sensitive to infrared radiation emitted from the front of the car. The enhanced image of the road and obstacles ahead, consisting of heat reflected from otherwise invisible objects, would then be projected in visible light onto the windscreen.

"Technically, we are really quite close to this," said Paul Mulvanny, principal technical specialist at Jaguar Engineering in Whitley. His division has already built and tested prototype systems and he reckons that working versions could be incorporated into cars by 2000.

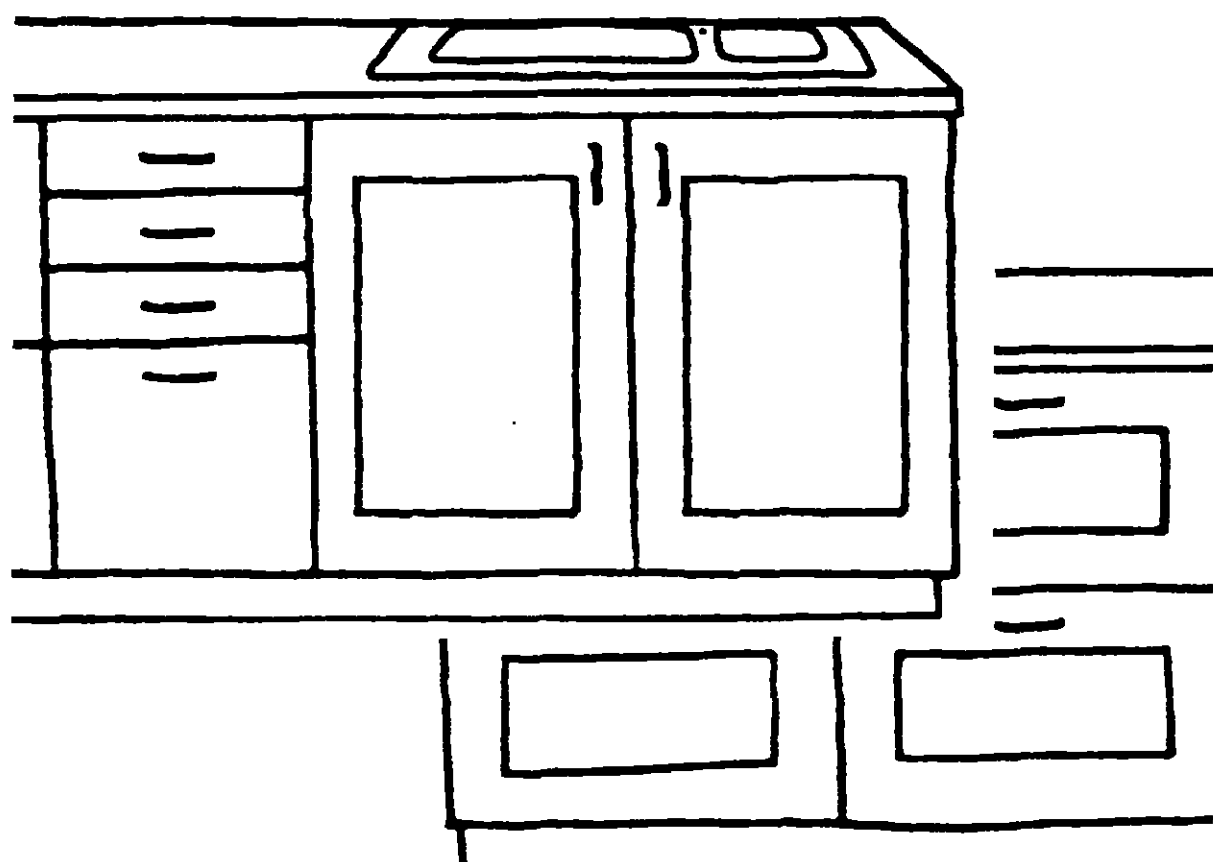
"This could double the pedestrian detection range for the average driver, and quadruple it for older drivers," he said. Research has found that drivers try to avoid night journeys as they get older, partly because natural eye deterioration causes problems watching the road, especially with oncoming headlights. In such circumstances, drivers are often unable to see properly because they are temporarily blinded. The infrared system would compensate for this.

US insurance industry figures suggest that driving at night is disproportionately dangerous: 55 per cent of serious accidents occur at night, with just 28 per cent of daytime traffic volumes.

The biggest problem will be to get the cost low enough to make it economical to include as a standard fitting. The system requires special headlamps, an infrared camera, projector and specially-developed glass for the windscreen.

"It's a chicken-and-egg situation," said Mr Mulvanny. "If we could fit it for free, then everyone would want one. Our initial target is the sort of people who bought in-car navigation systems. Those initially cost about £3,000, but the cost has come down considerably. The same would apply here."

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politics

Tories get personal in war to stop Blair win

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

Conservative election campaign managers have urged party officials to dig out "personal items" on Labour front-benchers in order to generate fear of a victory by Tony Blair.

A Tory strategy paper leaked to Labour says: "There is a real risk that the 'fear factor' which played such a large part in the

last election has been neutralised." The paper ordered material to be generated for use in the media about the difference between national Labour's rhetoric and its inefficiency and dogma in local government.

"In all instances," the paper says, "there should be a complete file on the frontbench spokesmen, showing their record in local government where applicable, their affilia-

tion with unions, the policies of the union which supports them... and any personal items like Harman and Blair's choice of schools.

"Together with normal briefings to the media, specific TV programmes need to be designed with suggested participants. The media also needs to be encouraged to interview local Labour chairmen of education."

The first fruits of the Tory strategy have already appeared this week in the *Daily Telegraph* and *The Sun* in pieces headlined: "Ten left-wing councils run up debts of £9bn" and "Labour's town hall of waste".

Labour's environment spokesman, Frank Dobson, picked up a report to be published by the official Audit Commission today, which says: "Councils are caught between a rock and a hard place: between government targets to reduce local authority spending and pressures for more and better services."

Labour has copied well. Mr Dobson said: "The Audit Commission have exposed the Tory lie machine for what it really is - the same old lies from the same old Tory liars."

The Audit Commission says most councils are doing a good job under increasing difficulties - caused in the main by Tory Government policies. The leaked Conservative paper says: "If Labour are total-

ly incompetent at running local budgets and most of their MPs and prospective parliamentary candidates are drawn from local government or union bodies, how can they run a national economy?"

In addition to Labour's success in defusing the "fear factor", the Conservative strategists concede Westminster council's "homes for votes" scandal has created a problem. "Homes for

votes has been a brilliantly enacted slur campaign executed by the whole of the Labour Party," the paper says.

"It has made it very difficult for the Government to attack Labour in the critical area of local government." It suggests research is needed, "particularly into the activities of the objectors." The "three best stories should be carefully planned and timed for maximum effect".

Group 4 admits no experience of nurseries

Judith Judd and Fran Abrams

Group 4, which was paid £14 million to award contracts for inspections of nursery schools, admitted last night that it had no experience of nursery education.

The company told the Commons Select Committee on Education that a former steel stockholder, an ex-brigadier and the principal of a sixth-form college carried out the interviews for the contractors to inspect nurseries under the nursery vouchers scheme.

Angry opposition MPs pointed out that the inspectors, who have vetted more than 350 private nursery schools for the voucher scheme, have failed just two. Under the schools inspection scheme, which deals with the more thoroughly-regulated state schools, four times as many are deemed to be failures.

Last night, Margaret Hodge, head of Labour's under-fives inquiry team, described the situation as "scandalous."

"Somebody, somewhere

must be putting pressure on. Quality appears to be being sacrificed on the altar of the election," she said.

In the committee, Rob Sontar from Group 4 said: "The group were selected not as educationalists but to select contractors under the criteria laid down by Ofsted."

Don Foster, the Liberal Democrats' education spokesman, told them: "It is slightly odd that you are proudly professing no knowledge of the business these contractors are in."

But a spokeswoman for Ofsted said the fact that only 0.6 per cent of the schools and play groups had failed was good news. "I am sure the parents will be delighted that their schools are providing an acceptable standard for their youngsters. There is not much more I can say," she said.

Labour's education spokesman David Blunkett said yesterday that he would cancel the voucher scheme. Vouchers sent out in April would be honoured but no more would be issued in September.



Vanishing species: The paper boy is threatened, according to campaigners - including the Committee for Diversity and Pluralism - who launched a petition yesterday demanding changes to newspaper distribution rules which they say are driving the corner shop out of business. Photograph: Tom Pilon

Nolan puts party funding on agenda

Christian Wolmar
Westminster Correspondent

Lord Nolan is encouraging the setting up of an inquiry into the funding of political parties, after the election.

Tony Blair, the Labour leader, has been pressing Lord Nolan, who is chairman of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, to hold such an inquiry because of the mystery which surrounds the sources of Tory funding, particularly contributions from abroad. Now, in response to a letter from Brian Wilson, Labour's campaign manager, Lord Nolan has said that he would like to see such an inquiry set up once the election is over.

He told Mr Wilson: "My own view is that party funding as a general issue is a subject that needs looking at."

The remit of the Nolan committee, set up in the wake of the cash-for-questions affair, does not generally extend to party funding and John Major has refused to sanction an inquiry. But it now appears that Labour may do so if it wins the election.

Major backs Clarke in Euro showdown

Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, today will face a showdown with the Euro-sceptics in the Cabinet over the European single currency, with the backing of John Major, Michael Heseltine and Malcolm Rifkind.

With their support, the Cabinet is expected to reaffirm its "wait and see" approach, and will rule out any change of policy before the general election.

By holding the Cabinet debate today, Mr Major will be seeking to settle the issue decisively, to avoid it overshadowing the political Cabinet at Chequers on Monday next week, when the outline of the Conservative election manifesto will be agreed.

Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, led the Cabinet Euro-sceptics in pressing the Chancellor to accept a more Euro-sceptic approach to the single currency. Others backing Mr Howard at a previous Cabinet meeting included Peter

Lilley, Michael Portillo and Gillian Shephard.

William Waldegrave, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, also took the view that Britain could not enter the first wave of a single currency. That influenced Stephen Dorrell, the Secretary of State for Health, who recently swung demands for Britain fundamentally to renegotiate its position in the European Union.

They were hoping to push the Chancellor into changing the policy by announcing that it was unlikely that Britain would enter the single currency in the first wave.

Mr Clarke's allies privately say he believes it is unlikely that Britain will enter the first wave. But he has rejected any shift of policy, arguing that it would be the start of a "slippery slope" leaving the Government with no option in the election but to rule out joining a single currency. He has left an implicit threat that he would resign if a change of policy was agreed.

The Cabinet Euro-sceptics had insisted that the other

member countries were judging the criteria for entering the single currency. They pointed to the French, who are using public sector pension funds to meet the Maastricht debt criteria for joining the currency.

The Chancellor will present the Cabinet with a Treasury paper telling colleagues that no judgement can be reached on whether or not the other countries are "fudging" the criteria until after the election. That would leave the Government with no alternative but to support the existing policy.

"We are sympathetic but the French example is a one-off. It is not enough evidence on which to decide that the criteria are being fudged," said one ministerial source.

The Euro-sceptics, having made a stand in the Cabinet, are expected to accept the lead taken by the Prime Minister to back Mr Clarke. They resolved to riding out the general election campaign on the "wait and see" approach, although they have warned it could prove untenable.

Fifth Tory win could alter entire political system

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

Another Conservative election win - a fifth consecutive victory - might damage democracy, but it could also bring about a new parliamentary system in which the opposition came from within Tory ranks.

"It won't be a hegemony for a five-year term," one Tory MP warned yesterday. "Another Conservative government would only be able to govern with cross-party support on issues like Europe and the single currency - with the backing of a Labour Party that believes in greater integration."

"The normal coalitions, within the parties, are falling apart. We could have as many as 100 Conservative MPs in the next Parliament who have pledged themselves against a single currency in their election addresses. There now seems to be a consensus across the House on spending and taxation. There are no great issues left now between the leaderships of the two main parties, but Europe will provide the focus for resistance."

"Will democracy be damaged by the re-election of the Conservatives? That depends on the composition of the new House of Commons - whether there are enough Conservative MPs with the will to stand

up to the presidential system." But he was concerned about the feeling of disenfranchisement of voters who would begin to feel that their votes were making no difference.

There are also fears that civil unrest could result from the pent-up frustration of voters who were always on the losing side. "Increased enthusiasm for extra-parliamentary activity could be desperately dangerous," one senior Tory told *The Independent*.

"There would be even more enthusiasm for simply circumventing the parliamentary process, and taking these issues into one's own hands in a way that starts to run up against the rule of law; it starts to run up against the principles of free speech and the democratic decision-making process."

One Tory backbencher said that if Labour lost again, the party would lurch to the left, while a Tory defeat would send the Conservatives spinning to the Right. "Isn't it always the case that in the wake of electoral

defeat, parties tend to drift toward their least attractive extreme? Because that is where the intellectual soul of the party tends to be buried."

"The Labour Party is a party of socialism, it's a party of egalitarianism. The Tories are a party of free enterprise, of capitalism, of private greed, whatever you want to call it. But it's quite clear that the Tories, when they lose, will start moving to the right. It's always the same. 'If only we had been truer to our principles,' they say."

"So it seems to me that if Labour lose, then the damage to the Labour Party is absolutely horrendous."

Another source said: "It's been said before that the Tories may, if they're sensible, benefit from losing the election. It will actually persuade some of our colleagues that it's not enough to be right, you've got to explain to people how you're right. Perhaps we've got out of touch with people, perhaps we stopped communicating with them. As such, we've forfeited that link with them which used to be our strongest weapon."

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news

Forget Ruskin and William Morris: this woman wants to take the flat cap out of the working men's college



Shake-up: Evelyn Murray, warden of the Working Men's College in Camden, north London, which she says must change

Photograph: John Voos

Lacey Ward
Education Correspondent

One of England's oldest adult education colleges, founded 150 years ago to provide a liberal education for working-class men, is being rocked by an internal dispute over claims that its governors are betraying its socialist roots and succumbing to the pressures of the marketplace.

The Working Men's College, in Camden, north London, which boasts John Ruskin, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Charles Kingsley among its former staff, is the focus of a clash between a philanthropic educational tradition in which teachers once worked for free, and the harsh reality of modern further-education funding.

The battle to dictate the identity of the college in the next millennium has pitched a group of staff, claiming an ally in the ghost of the institution's Christian Socialist founder Frederick Maurice, against the principal, Lord McIntosh of Haringey.

Labour's deputy spokesman in the House of Lords.

The row centres on plans approved by the college corporation, a board of trustees and directors, for a fundamental shake-up of the way the institution is governed. The proposal is for the present system, in which the corporation oversees the college's trust funds but delegates educational and policy matters to an elected council of staff and students, to be replaced with a single governing body.

The rebels claim the move, which they hope to challenge in the courts, is undemocratic and out of keeping with the founder's ideals since it would leave no more than one-third of seats on the new body for teachers and students. But Lord McIntosh and the college's warden, Evelyn Murray, insist that a change is essential if the tradition of providing education for people with little access to other forms of study is to be continued.

Malvern Hostick, art teacher, college council member and a critic of the reforms, fears they will destroy a key aim of the founder who saw students taking control of their studies. "FD Maurice and his contemporaries felt teachers and students should learn from each other, and that students should eventually set their own curriculum," he said. "I think they would be rather dismayed that, thanks to market forces, we are going back to an autocratic system."

The principal and warden give short shrift to the rebels' claims to speak for the founder. The college, which today has more than 2,000 students, two-

thirds of them women, has long left behind its tradition of unpaid teaching, and has only two such staff left, Ms Murray says. "In its heyday, the lecturers were civil servants, lawyers or clergymen who worked in the morning and then came to college for a meal and a bit of teaching in the evening. Nowadays, ambitious barristers are on the next plane to New York."

A report last year by inspectors from the Further Education Funding Council, which finances 15 per cent of the college's courses, praised some teaching but found "significant weaknesses" in governance, management and quality assurance. Following the report, the corporation set up working groups to devise an action plan, which included the new governance.

Lord McIntosh says the present system does not work. "Very few students or staff stand for election and the corporation and council don't actually do the things that are necessary - they don't make difficult decisions on the budget or establish the educational programme." The college had interpreted the founders' intentions in the language of the Nineties, and now offered academic qualifications and leisure courses, he said.

The college's class of '97, while doubtless as hungry for knowledge as its forbears, as yet knows little of the dispute raging beneath the institution's William Morris-designed ceilings. "I don't know about the politics," music student Richard Leskin said. "I just come for the course. But I would be worried if the fees went up."

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DAILY POEM

Long-Term Misunderstanding

By Ifigenija Simonovic
(translated by the author and Anthony Rudolf)

when young he asks: who are you
smooth little snake
nesting sweetly in my bed
and I think: I am a she-wolf
looking through her teeth to see
how to sneak under your skin
but I say I am
little red riding hood
riding your head

when old he asks: who are you
what do you want now
what is all this now
what else do you need
to fill up and I think:
a drop of poison please
but I say nothing and he thinks
I mean it, I am riding his head
but he says: nothing my sweet
little red riding snake
and I think he means it and I go
out of my head

Born in Slovenia, Ifigenija Simonovic now works as a potter in London (where she has a stall in Covent Garden market) but still writes in her native language. This poem comes from her collection *Striking Root*, available for £7.99 from The Menard Press at 8 The Oaks, Woodside Avenue, London N12 8AR.

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man wants college

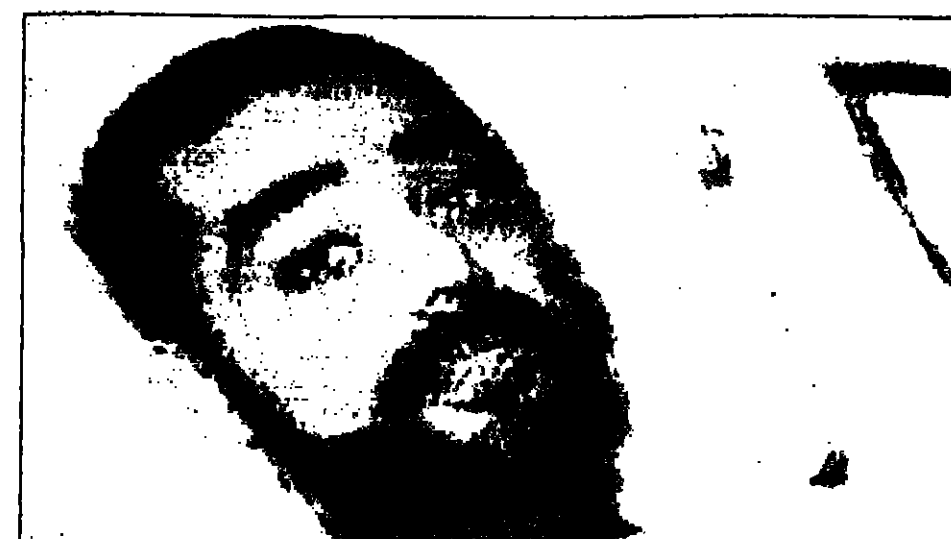
University spokesman in London. The spokesman on plans to open a college for students of the Middle East and Africa, a fundamentalist way of the institution. The proposal is to set up a new system, in which the college oversees the funds but delegates the day-to-day running to a council of trustees. The council would be made up of representatives from the Middle East and Africa, and would be responsible for the college's financial and academic affairs. The spokesman said the college would be a "unique institution" and would provide a "high quality education" for students from the Middle East and Africa. The college would be based in London and would have a campus of about 100 acres. The spokesman said the college would be a "major development" for the Middle East and Africa community in London.

Mutilation that led to attack on Saddam's son

Patrick Cockburn

The attack which crippled Uday, the son of Saddam Hussein, was organised by a member of the Iraqi leader's own extended family in revenge for the killing of his uncle, a senior army general, seven years ago. A group of people ambushed Uday, one of the most important members of the regime, as he drove with his girlfriend in Baghdad on 12 December. The name of the leader of the group, The Independent has learned from an Iraqi source, is Ra'ad al-Hazaa, the nephew of General Omar Mohammed al-Hazaa who was executed by President Saddam in 1990.

Uday, 32, remains in hospital in Baghdad paralysed by at least four bullet wounds. One is lodged in his spine, according to opposition groups. The seriousness of his injuries was confirmed by the French government's admission last week that he had been seen by a team of French doctors in Baghdad. Paris has refused permission for Uday to come to France for medical treatment. Credit for the ambush has been claimed by a number of opposition groups, notably by al-Dawa, an extreme Shia Muslim militant movement which in the past has made guerrilla attacks on the regime.



Blood ties: Uday in hospital. The attack was a severe blow to his father, Saddam (right)



Photograph: Reuters

Uday is not known to have taken part in the killing. But he is notorious as the most violent member of the regime, beating his father's personal bodyguard Kamel Hussein Jajo to death in 1988. He precipitated the flight of General Hussein Kamel, President Saddam's son-in-law, in 1995, and murdered him on his return last year. Uday's drunkenness and womanising may also have made him an easier target.

He says: "In 1990 the general was arrested. He was taken to al-Ouja and his tongue was cut out. Then he was executed. His son Farouq was killed at the same time and the general's house in Baghdad was bulldozed." The mutilation of political prisoners before execution is common in Iraq as a way of intimidating relatives to whom the body is returned. Uday is not known to have taken part in the killing. But he is notorious as the most violent member of the regime, beating his father's personal bodyguard Kamel Hussein Jajo to death in 1988. He precipitated the flight of General Hussein Kamel, President Saddam's son-in-law, in 1995, and murdered him on his return last year. Uday's drunkenness and womanising may also have made him an easier target.

significant shorts

Communists fail to oust Yeltsin

A long-shot Communist bid to oust President Boris Yeltsin for being ill failed in parliament yesterday. The Communists could not muster enough support to pass the resolution. Such a resolution would have declared Yeltsin's presidency "terminated"; the Prime Minister, Victor Chernomyrdin, would have been placed in charge, and a presidential election called. But the resolution's sponsor vowed to continue his battle to get rid of Mr Yeltsin and claimed that procedural errors marred the vote.

BSE deaths herald crisis in Germany

Germany has ordered the slaughter of all cows imported from Britain and Switzerland, and has imposed tighter restrictions on their offspring, after a crisis meeting of ministers. Following the death last week of the fifth German-born cow to fall victim to bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), passed on from its British-born mother, 5,200 animals are to be destroyed. Another 7,000 calves born in Germany were reprieved, although they will not be allowed to be slaughtered for meat. *Innsbruck - Bonn*

Euthanasia law 'works'

A 69-year-old man has become the third Australian to commit suicide under the euthanasia law of the Northern Territory and doctors said the death shows the controversial law is now working well. The unnamed man was suffering from terminal stomach cancer. *Reuters - Canberra*

French rail strike

France's two biggest rail unions called for a strike on 30 January against plans to reform the heavily indebted SNCF state railway. *Reuters - Paris*

Paris bank chief freed

Hundreds of employees occupying the Paris headquarters of the troubled state bank Credit Foncier de France released its chairman, Jerome Meyssonnier, but said that the siege, in its sixth day, would continue.

Military loses sex battle

A federal judge ruled that a new law banning the sale of sexually explicit material at United States government-operated military stores violates the First Amendment, which pledges freedom of speech.

Ethiopia team goes offside

Sixteen members of Ethiopia's national soccer squad sought political asylum in Italy, leaving their country without a proper team after slipping their escort during a stopover on the way to a match.

Pas de fumer'

French smokers were fuming over the country's first court decision to order a crackdown on tobacco use in public under a theoretically tough, but virtually unenforced, 1991 law.

China nets its students

To help convince its students studying overseas to return home, China will set up an Internet site to facilitate exchanges of information about research, education and jobs. *AP - Peking*

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Second jury puts OJ's defence to the test

Blackboard



10



The fortunes of American newspapers as a whole have also been boosted recently by a moderation in newsprint prices which in recent years had risen to unprofitable levels.

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international

Prostitutes from the slum may hold key to Aids cure

David Orr
Nairobi

Monica Marwa is a 25-year-old prostitute living in the notorious Majengo slum on the outskirts of the Kenyan capital, Nairobi. She charges between 30 and 50 Kenyan shillings (between 33 and 55 pence) for sex. There is nothing extraordinary about her line of work nor about her fees – it is estimated that more than half of the women in Majengo sell their bodies for such paltry rewards.

What is surprising is that, despite years of unprotected sex and exposure to the HIV virus, Monica seems to be immune to Aids.

Here is one of some 40 similar cases in Majengo which scientists believe could hold the key to an Aids cure. In a programme bringing together the University of Nairobi with Oxford University and two universities in North America, researchers are mapping the genes of Majengo's HIV-resistant women in an effort to discover what it is that protects them from infection.

"We are taking blood from the HIV-negative women and their relatives as well as from some women who have tested positive," says Dr Ephraim Njagi, whose work at the Majengo clinic for commercial sex workers is at the forefront of the research programme. "At the moment we believe some women have a genetic make-up

which enables them to produce something which kills off the virus.

"Eventually, we hope it will be possible to produce a vaccine which will immunise people against Aids."

HIV-resistance is considered the "hottest" area of Aids research. To date, most studies on the subject have been confined to homosexual men in the United States.

Nearly 1,900 commercial sex workers have been documented since the clinic at Majengo was opened just over 10 years ago. In that time, 400 of the women have died of Aids. More than 90 per cent of the clinic's clients are HIV-positive.

"I'm really surprised I'm negative," says Monica on the day she calls at the clinic for a biannual blood test. "When I started in 1991, I never asked the men to use a condom. I only began insisting on it in 1993. Quite a few of my friends have died of Aids. I thank God, I'm very lucky."

When Monica comes to the clinic she takes three cartons containing 144 condoms each. Although they are free, condom usage is estimated at only 70 per cent among Majengo's prostitutes. Even the HIV-negative women are advised to use condoms as their immunity cannot be guaranteed.

Monica has an average of four or five clients a day though towards the end of the month, when workers are paid, that number can rise to 15 or 20 a day.

The evidence that HIV resistance could be genetic is persuasive. Two of the HIV-resistant women attending the clinic, categorised as Nos 887 and 893, are sisters. No 887 has three daughters, all prostitutes, who have consistently proved to be HIV-negative. No 893 has two daughters who work as prostitutes and are also HIV-negative.

Yet, resistance to the virus is not automatically inherited by all family members. Mastura Adam, another prostitute, is HIV-negative despite exposure to the virus. Both her aunt and her sister are sex workers. Yet while the former has proved immune to HIV infection, the latter is seropositive.

The HIV-resistant women at Majengo show no trace of the HIV antibodies normally associated with people who indulge in high-risk sexual behaviour. Yet they regularly become infected with sexually transmitted diseases so must also be frequently exposed to HIV. Cases like theirs are fuelling speculation that some people are genetically programmed to produce specialised cells which neutralise the virus after it enters their bodies.

It is estimated that in Kenya a million people – more than 7 per cent of the population – are HIV positive. In some areas of Nairobi, 20 to 30 per cent of women coming for prenatal check-ups are infected with the virus.



Medical miracle: Monica Marwa (right, in a Nairobi clinic), remains HIV-negative despite exposure to the virus. Photograph: David Orr

Poverty squeezes blood out of Russia

Phil Reeves
Moscow

For once, Andrei Rogovoy had a good day. Since leaving the army, he has been searching for a job which would put enough food on the table for his wife and one-year-old daughter. Yesterday he found one, albeit short-lived: he sold his blood.

By Russian standards, the returns were good – just over \$20 (£12). And although he can only give blood once every two months, he can sell plasma once a fortnight for double the fee. By the month's end, he should have struggled above the national poverty line.

Unlike many blood donors, Mr Rogovoy, 22, is motivated by cash. He is not alone. True, some of the 150 people who queue daily in the dingy corridors of the Moscow blood transfusion centre are altruists, or merely looking for drinks money (the crowds double just before public holidays). But plenty are drawn there by need.

The donors – ranging from dismally-paid economists and accountants to soldiers whose pay packets have been delayed – all live in an economy that has yet to deliver the promised riches that rang so loudly in their ears when Russia embarked on its free market reforms.

In the last few days, the Russian government has churned out statistics providing further evidence that the downward spiral which began shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union is proving harder to correct than many of the advocates of reform, including leading Western economists, had predicted.

In 1996, Russia's gross domestic product (GDP) plunged 6 per cent, 2 per cent more than in the previous year. Wage arrears rose to more than \$8bn, money owed to tens of millions of employees, from teachers to air traffic controllers and policemen. On average, the profits of those enterprises that were making money fell by half in the first nine months of the year, dealing yet another blow to the government's tax collectors, who were already losing a battle against non-payment.

To be fair, there was a dip in the number of people below the government-defined poverty line, earning less than \$68 per month. But the figure is still appallingly high – 32 million people, or one in five of the

population. Unemployment is growing, hitting 9.5 per cent in December, according to official estimates – although a report released yesterday by Guy Standing of the International Labour Organisation said the true figure is far higher.

Russia's Economics Minister, Yevgeny Yasin, has been surprisingly willing to admit that his government's reforms failed last year. There was, he conceded, only one significant advance: a tenfold drop in the inflation rate of the previous year to just over 20 per cent. Frantic efforts to ensure the re-election of Boris Yeltsin by handing out promises of money across the country overrode good housekeeping. "We sacrificed 1996 to the altar of democracy," the minister said.

Now, with Mr Yeltsin back in office – albeit sick, isolated and fending off cries for his resignation – Mr Yasin's ministry is planning a counter-attack. It has presented the government with a three-year plan to turn the economy around, which he unveiled yesterday. It is an odd mixture of tough Thatcherism and social democratic paternalism. Deep cuts in social spending sit alongside a commitment to state support for high technology industries, notably aerospace and nuclear power.

The former includes sweeping aside the legacy of Soviet welfare by slashing the huge sums spent on subsidising housing and communal services. This should be replaced by targeted payments, aimed only at the genuinely needy, he said. He also wants to end cross-subsidising of domestic gas and power, and passenger transport by big industry. "Tariffs must cover the real costs," said the minister, pointing out that households pay about 10-15 per cent of the real costs of electrical power.

The overall thrust of the plan is to cut the level of "unbearable" state spending which is the same proportion of the GDP – about 45 per cent – as the hugely more prosperous Germany. Although it would, Mr Yasin conceded, be an "extremely difficult" programme, it would set Russia on course for 2 per cent growth this year, rising to 5 per cent by 2000.

It is, of course, only a plan. There are many unpredictable factors, from the future of Mr Yeltsin to the overall climate for international investment.



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population. Unemployment is growing, hitting 9.3 per cent in December, according to official estimates - although a report released yesterday by Guy Sater of the International Labour Organisation said the unemployment rate is higher.

Russia's Economic Minister Yegor Gerasimov has been surprisingly willing to admit that the government's reform package, last year, was not as successful as it seemed. He said the inflation rate of 1996 was just over 20 per cent, a far cry from the 1995 figure of 100 per cent.

Mr Gerasimov said the government was planning a "winter attack" on inflation, but it was not clear when this would happen. He said the government was planning to cut interest rates and to increase the money supply.

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Col Tom Parker

When Elvis Presley met Colonel Tom Parker in a Memphis restaurant in 1955, it was the start of a relationship that would transform their lives and see the creation of a 20th-century cultural phenomenon.

Parker, the one-time carnival huckster and country music promoter, would become almost as famous and revered as his protégé, the teenage hillbilly who became the King of Rock 'n' Roll. For good or ill he would oversee the creation of the singer and actor's career through its many stages of birth, renewal and decline, until Elvis's death in 1977.

It was Parker who groomed the teenage rebel for a new role as the acceptable face of American showbiz. He oversaw the transformation from "Elvis the Pelvis" to the Hollywood star of countless lightweight movies. Gradually it came to be perceived that perhaps the Colonel was too protective and was the root cause of the erosion of Presley's talents and stature.

But this was only in the eyes of critics and those fans - like John Lennon - who saw Elvis as crucial to the development of the rock 'n' roll. Millions of less demanding Elvis fans around the world queued up to see the movies like *Blue Hawaii* (1961) and *Viva Las Vegas* (1964) and continued to swoon at his feet, while spangled jumpsuits and all.

Col Thomas Andrew Parker - the all-American father figure - wasn't the first to discover Elvis. He wasn't a colonel and he wasn't even born in America. His origins were steeped in mystery.

He always said he was born in West Virginia, but it was revealed in the 1960s (by a Dutch researcher and later explored in *Elvis*, 1981, Albert Goldman's hard-hitting biography) that he was born Andreas Cornelius Van Kuijk in Breda, Holland in 1909, the fifth of a family of nine children.

His somewhat tyrannical father Adam ran a livery stable, and as a child Andreas loved looking after the horses. Fascinated by the circus, he'd drive around town on a cart promoting the local show and tried to see every performance.

His father died when Andreas was 16 and he went to live with an uncle who was a ship's captain. Under his auspices he sailed for New York and returned to Holland in 1927, bringing gifts for his mother but refusing to reveal what he'd been doing in the States. He returned to America for good in May 1929 and his family in Holland never heard from him again until they saw his photograph in a magazine in 1961.

Andreas had learned to speak English as he explored the States, hitchhiking rides on railroad cars. After a stint as a salesman he joined the US army in 1930 and served with the coastal artillery at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii. It has been suggested he assumed his new name from a Captain Thomas Parker he met in the service.

Given his love of the circus it was natural he gravitated to the American version, and he began working for the Royal American Shows, a touring carnival which included everything from roller-coaster rides to animal acts and freak shows.

He stayed for some ten years, learning everything there was to know about showbusiness bunkum and the art of publicity and promotion.

Tales of his stunts and exploits have been gleefully recounted - like that of Col Parker and His Amazing Dancing Chickens. Live animals were regarded as tax exempt as they needed feeding. A pair of chickens were kept in a cage at the side of the stage, until Parker decided one night to recruit them into an act. He concealed a hot plate under their feet and set them to work - dancing animatedly to the tune of "Turkey in the Straw".

In 1932, while working with the carnival in Tampa, Florida, he met and married Marie Ross who became his wife and bookkeeper. During the Second World War he was deferred military service and in 1940 took a temporary job as Tampa's town dog catcher, after the failure of a projected Pony Circus. He soon returned to showbusiness, becoming manager of the country singers Eddie Arnold and Hank Snow who benefited from his energy and enterprise



Parker with Elvis Presley, to whom he offered kindly, even fatherly advice, with a hint of iron discipline. Photograph: London Features International

throughout the 1940s and 1950s. It was through his country music connections that Parker was bestowed his honorary title "Colonel" in 1948 by the Governor of Louisiana. He also managed the pop singer Gene Austin who had a big hit with "My Blue Heaven". Parker and Hank Snow opened a booking agency in Nashville in the 1950s which was when the Colonel first heard about Elvis Presley.

Oscar Davies, a fellow promoter who had heard Presley on radio and seen him perform "live", recommended that Parker should see the boy in action. At the time he was being managed by Bob Neal and produced by Sam Phillips at Sun Studios. At their first meeting at the Memphis restaurant, Parker simply said to Elvis: "Oscar tells me you're sensational. I'm going to see if I can book you on one of my shows."

Parker booked Elvis on a ten-

day tour and was amazed at the reaction he got particularly from screaming young girl fans. Presley's first big tour, which began in May 1955, was supported by Hank Snow. Having pursued Elvis with great determination and fending off competition from others with an interest in him, Parker finally signed Presley to a management contract on 15 August 1955. It was believed that he took 25 per cent of Presley's earnings during the first years of their association and later up to 50 per cent.

In a famous clause to his first agreement with Presley, a paragraph was inserted which stated: "As a special concession to Col Parker, Elvis Presley is to play 100 personal appearances within one year for the special sum of \$200 - including his musicians."

As was later pointed out this meant Elvis would have to play a large number of concerts at reduced rates. It was perhaps no

worse a situation than many another rock star would find him or herself. But Parker had shown a ruthlessness in his business methods which did not always endear him to others, although it helped ensure that Presley was signed to a lucrative contract with RCA, and Parker booked him on to early appearances on the *Ed Sullivan Show* on television that made him a star.

With Presley himself he seemed to offer kindly, even fatherly advice, but he showed a hint of iron discipline. Many feared Parker and his powers and suggested that Elvis was in awe of him. Apart from his love of a fast truck, Parker's most serious deficiencies were held to be a lust for gambling, smoking cigars and over-eating.

Yet he conducted himself well in most of his business affairs, did not drink or take drugs, and was a loyal husband and father to his stepson.

Throughout the years when Elvis was touring, making movies or later performing his Las Vegas cabaret shows, Parker remained at the helm, keeping tabs on everything from merchandising to the fan clubs.

After Elvis's drug-related death in 1977, Parker virtually retired and only occasionally emerged to defend his role as Presley's mentor. He spent his last years walking with a cane to the gaming tables of Las Vegas where he lived from the 1980s onwards. He was often asked to write his own book about Elvis, but replied: "You know what they want - dirt. But I'm not a dirt farmer."

Chris Welch
Andreas Cornelius Van Kuijk ("Colonel Tom Parker"), manager and promoter: born Breda, Holland 36 June 1909; twice married; died Las Vegas 21 January 1997.

Dennis Main Wilson

Dennis Main Wilson was an enthusiast; one of the breed of producers who emerged, or rather exploded, into the BBC after the Second World War.

His army career centred around his ability to speak German and by the end of the war he was deeply involved in the post-Nazi restructuring of German radio. On demobilisation he rejoined the BBC (where he had worked before call-up) in the burgeoning variety department.

Main Wilson and radio were made for each other. He had a great imagination and his insight was phenomenal. His skill as a talent-spotter was more highly tuned than any of his contemporaries and it was Main Wilson, looking for a character actor to join the cast of *Hancock's Half Hour*, who spotted Kenneth Williams, then playing the Dauphin in Shaw's *St Joan*. *Hancock's Half Hour* was arguably the best comedy series of its day and Main Wilson first came in contact with the programme's writers, Ray Galton and Alan Simpson, in 1951, at the beginning of their careers. He was brought in to salvage a series they were working on called *Happy Go Lucky*, and promoted them from "five bob a joke" men to be the show's principal writers. It started a friendship and professional relationship that

was to bear fruit in 1954 with *Hancock's Half Hour*.

Nineteen fifty-one was a bumper year for radio and for Main Wilson too, as on 28 May *The Goon Show* was born. It was originally called *Crazy People* and, with Spike Milligan, Michael Bentine, Harry Secombe and Peter Sellers starring, it was hair-raising stuff at that time.

If Main Wilson had a flaw in his character it was that he empathised with everyone with whom he worked. With the *Crazy People* crowd he became as eccentric as his cast, so much so that in the third series he was replaced by the sober, disciplined producer Peter Eton.

Main Wilson's other credits at this time included *Pertwee's Progress*, starring Jon Pertwee, and including in its cast another of Main Wilson's discoveries, Barry Took. In those days I was a sort of second division Kenneth Williams and this was my first series. He and I became friends and came together again in television some years later when he produced the award-winning series *Marty* (1968), starring Marty Feldman and written by Marty and me, and a one-off which celebrated the 10th anniversary of *Private Eye*, called *Private Eye TV*. Main Wilson is also credited with helping the careers of the

Cambridge Footlights group of Tony Slattery, Emma Thompson, Stephen Fry and Hugh Laurie.

Among his many successes as a producer was *The Rag Trade*, which starred Peter Jones, Reg Varney, Miriam Karlin and Sheila Hancock, but his most important contribution to the medium was undoubtedly *Till Death Us Do Part*. The combination of Main Wilson, Johnny Speight and Warren Mitchell turned out to be a world beater and a triumph of enthusiasm and daring.

Sometimes Main Wilson's enthusiasm could be a little overwhelming. I think of him as the kind of man who, if you asked him the time, would say, "Ah, it's interesting you should ask me that because I've just been talking to the man whose grandfather built Big Ben", and would then proceed to describe in detail the man, the clock, the history of parliamentary democracy, and in the process would forget what you'd asked him in the first place.

There was a time when it was thought to be a good idea to follow the *Nine O'Clock News* with a 10-minute fictionalised discussion of the day's events. Main Wilson booked Johnny Speight and Eric Sykes to appear on the pilot programme.

Johnny sports a somewhat aggressive stammer. Eric suffers from deafness. Hearing about the show a wit in the bar at Television Centre remarked, "Dennis has done the ultimate. He's got a man who can't speak talking to a man who can't hear."

His gift for talent-spotting never deserted him. Seeing a production exercise written by Ian La Frenais and Dick Clement, Main Wilson insisted that this had tremendous potential and in spite of tough opposition got his way and so *The Likely Lads* emerged. Similarly, when having read some work written by a shy young scene shifter at Television Centre he came to the conclusion that here was a star in the making. The young man was John Sullivan and one of his many creations, *Only Fools and Horses*, became a national institution.

Dennis Main Wilson could be a nuisance, even - dare I say it - boring at times but his flair, joie de vivre, insight, and above all his energy, will be remembered and cherished by all who knew this remarkable man.

Barry Took
Dennis Main Wilson, television producer: born London 1 May 1924; married 1955 Sylvia Hartin (one son, one daughter); died Guildford 20 January 1997.



Crazy people: Main Wilson (on the floor) with the Goons, left to right, Michael Bentine, Harry Secombe, Peter Sellers and Spike Milligan. Their first show went out in May 1951. Photograph: BBC

James Dickey

James Dickey was the Hemingway of the American poetry world.

A former fighter pilot and star athlete, Dickey became famous for his machismo-ridden novel *Deliverance*; his celebrity was further enhanced by the success of the subsequent film, but his best work was in his poetry. Here, too, he explored the conflict between man and nature which, when caricatured, made *Deliverance* such a success, but he also brought a lyric sense and beautifully attuned ear not found in the crude commercialism of his novel. Though personal, his poems avoided the confessional preoccupations of so many of his peers; though capable of technical variety, they were never remotely stylised or, for that matter, epicene.

Dickey was a Southerner, raised in Atlanta chiefly by his grandmother because of an invalid mother. He also spent much of his childhood with his father's relatives in rural northeast Georgia, and this acquaintance with Southern country life provided material for many of his poems, as well as for the dramatic encounters of *Deliverance*. As a boy Dickey gave little indication of the literary talents that would emerge in his thirties, preferring athletic to aesthetic pursuits in his teenage years.

Trained as a pilot in the US Army's Air Force, he flew over 10,000 missions in the Second World War, and was recalled to active duty in Korea. His war experiences figured prominently in his poems, but only a chance receipt of an anthology of verse while he was stationed on Okinawa triggered his own first attempts at writing.

His education interrupted by the war, Dickey none the less received a BA and an MA from Vanderbilt University, then taught for two years as an instructor of English at Rice University, in Texas, in the early 1950s. He left teaching and worked full-time in advertising for six years, an experience that distinguished him from most of his poetry-writing colleagues, who were busy constituting the first generation of American writers to make their living through a succession of "creative writing" teaching posts. Successful at business, Dickey put his personal energies into his poems, and when his first book, *Into the Stone*, appeared in 1960 quit advertising. Thereafter he too took a succession of teaching jobs, settling permanently at the University of Southern Carolina in 1969.

Dickey's early poems were formal, technically accomplished, influenced as much by European models (he had travelled widely as a Guggenheim and Sewanee fellow) as by his native Georgian roots. Already, however, the lyric ear is deft, and there is no hesitancy in exploring the most intense emotions, as in his evocation of his brother, dead before Dickey himself was born:

With all my heart, I close
The blue, timeless eye of my mind
Wind springs, as my dead brother smiles
And touches the tree at the root.

In these early poems, the feelings are heartfelt, but the voice remains constrained by its obeisance to conventional forms - the settings and descriptions remain abstract and without locale, and the diction of depicted nature is generic (with repeated use of common nouns such as "stone", "water", or "wind") rather than specific.

With *Helmets* (1964) and *Buckdancer's Choice*, which won the National Book Award in 1965, all changes: a South of rattlesnakes, kudzu, and teenage trysts in abandoned cars now plays centre-stage, along with poems vividly recalling his experiences of combat. Violence, sex, and a clash of the Confederate past with the

surface homogeneity of post-war America make the work almost unprecedently raw, as in Dickey's fear of a girlfriend's angry father:

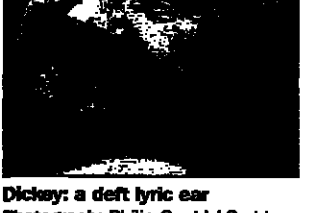
Who would change, in the squalling
burn,
Her back's pale skin with a strop.
Then lay for me

In a bootlegger's roasting car with a string-triggered 12-gauge shotgun
To blast the breath from the air.

Interspersed with the lyrics are longer narrative poems, with rambling Hopkins-like rhythms of no relation to the tight forms of his early work. The effect of these poems was immense, strengthened by Dickey's own critical campaigning, waged chiefly on his own behalf.

Yet, in these narrative poems especially, the governing conceits can teeter on the preposterous, as in the famous "Falling", a dramatic account of a stewardess's fall from an airplane, six miles up. The sexuality of her gradual fall through the sky draws on every stereotype of the nubile flight attendant, and at times the language is simply absurd: as her clothes fall off in the slipstream, Dickey comments that she is "no longer monobuttocked". Even when teetering on the grotesquely clichéd, however, the language can compel, as when Dickey speaks of an imminent extinction that "slumbers in corn tassels" and "breathes like rich farmers counting".

The technical oddness of his narratives aside, Dickey's chief weakness in these longer poems lies in his inability to penetrate the characters he invents. His eye for revealing detail inevitably reflects more in showy fashion on the unspoken "I" of the author than on the people he describes at length. This is especially true of *Deliverance*, a reasonably well-recounted pot-



Dickey: a deft lyric ear. Photograph: Philip Gould / Corbis

boiler of urban men on a river trip thrown into primitive conflict with the wilds and with Appalachian throbbings.

Well before this book's appearance in 1970, Dickey was famous - or famous as an unusual fish could be in the small pond of American poetry. But the novel and the film it spawned (the latter starring Burt Reynolds) brought Dickey true national celebrity, highlighted by his choice two decades later as the poet who read at President Clinton's inaugural in 1992.

Unsurprisingly, his poetry suffered; even the fictional follow-ups to *Deliverance*, the novels *Abilam* (1987) and *To the White Sea* (1993), seemed drab by comparison to the shock value of their predecessor. Sadly, although *Deliverance* had made Dickey America's most famous living poet, it had served to diminish his considerable and well-deserved reputation as a poet. Curiously, time may well deliver him from him from this celebrity and return us to his best work, his poems.

Andrew Rosenheim
James Dickey, poet and novelist: born Atlanta 2 February 1923; married 1948 Maxine Syerson (died 1976; two sons); 1976 Deborah Dodson (one daughter; marriage dissolved); died Columbia, South Carolina 19 January 1997.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Prince of Wales visits the Centre for Advanced Religious and Theological Studies, Cambridge. The Princess Royal, Patron, Sees - the National Deafblind and Rubella Association, visits the Toy Library Centre, Kingston, Gloucestershire; as Patron, the National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux, visits the Bath and District Citizens Advice Bureau, Bath, Somerset; and as Commandant in Chief, St John Ambulance and Nursing Orders, attends an Opening Ceremony and Dedication of the new Training and Resource Centre and Ambulance Station, the Harry Crook Centre, Bournemouth, Dorset. The Duke of Gloucester opens the Exhibition "Royal Palace", Architectural Works from the Collections of Cambridge University Library, at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

Changing of the Guard

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; 1st Battalion Scots Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Irish Guards.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Burials, Cremations) should be sent to the Gazette Office, The Independent, 1, Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 3DL. Telephone: 0171-233 2011 (24-hour answering machine: 0171-233 2012) or fax to 0171-233 2010. The charge is £50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER: Gazette announcements (weddings, funerals, christenings, marriages, etc.) are charged at £20 a line, VAT extra. Please include a daytime telephone number.

Forthcoming marriages

Dr A. W. Gray and Dr D. D. Bell. The engagement is announced between Alexander, only son of Mr and Mrs Michael Gray, of Pinner, Middlesex, and Diane, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Harold Bell, of Cockstown, County Tyrone.

Birthdays

Mr John Adams, composer, 50; Dame Mary Arden, High Court judge, 50; Mr David Colvin, ambassador to Belgium, 50; Lord Denning, former Master of the Rolls, 98; Mrs Gillian duCharme, headmistress, Benenden School, 59; Air Marshal Sir Barry Duxbury, director and chief executive, Company of British Aerospace, 63; Sir John Grenside, chartered accountant, 76; Brigadier Donald Hardie, Lord-Lieutenant, Strathclyde Region (Dumfries), 61; Mr Bill Hayden, former Governor-General of Australia, 64; Mr Thomas Hudson, former chairman, ICL Ltd, 82; Sir James Lighthill, former Provost of University College, London, 73; Miss Jeanne Moore, actress, 69; Miss Christine Nicholls, former editor, *Dictionary of National Biography* Supplements, 54; Mr Edward Rowlands MP, 57; Sir Kenneth Scott, former Deputy Private Secretary to the

Queen, 66; Lord Sutherland, a

Senator of the College of Justice in Scotland, 65; Mrs Joan Walley MP, 48; Mr Brian Weight, former chief constable, Dorset, 61.

Anniversaries

Births: Stendhal (Henri-Marie Bayle), novelist, 1783; Edouard Manet, painter, 1832. Deaths: William Baffin, explorer, 1622; Anna Pavlova, ballerina, 1931; Paul Bonill Robertson, actor and singer, 1976. On this day: the Royal Exchange, London, was opened by Queen Elizabeth I, 1571; Fletcher Christian and the *Bounty* mutineers landed on Pitcairn Island, 1790; the proceedings of the House of Lords were televised for the first time, 1985. Today is the Feast Day of St Asclas, St Bernard of Vienne, Saints Clement and Agathangelus, St Emmerentius, St Idophonus, St John the Almsgiver, St Luthildis and St Maimbold.

Lectures

National Gallery: Alistair Smith, "Paintings from Copenhagen (iv): two pictures by Ekenberg", 1pm. Tate Gallery: Sarah Lucas talks about her work, 6.30pm. British Museum: Hilary Williams, "Elfenbein, Marlborough House, and a pair of ice buckets", 1.15pm. National Portrait Gallery: Jane Desmarais, "Anthony Beardsley", 1.10pm.

Compensation for solicitor's mortgage fraud refused

LAW REPORT

23 January 1997

Regina v Law Society, ex parte Mortgage Express Ltd, and ex parte Alliance & Leicester Building Society; Court of Appeal (Sir Thomas Bingham, Lord Chief Justice, Lord Justice Mummery, Sir Brian Neill) 17 December 1996

The fact that a solicitor's client had lost money because of the solicitor's dishonesty did not of itself entitle the client to be compensated from the Law Society's compensation fund, and if the client's loss was partly caused by other factors, such as a negligent or dishonest valuation or a fall in property prices, then the Law Society was entitled to refuse compensation.

The Court of Appeal allowed the Law Society's appeal against the decision of Mr Justice Ognall, on 30 July 1996, who granted an application for judicial review to quash its refusal to meet five claims by Mortgage Express Ltd for payments out of the Law Society's compensation fund under section 36 of the Solicitors Act 1974.

Geneva Cans QC and Rabinder Singh (Bindman & Partners) for the Law Society; Nicholas Patten QC and Timothy Harry (Lightfoots) for MXL.

Sir Thomas Bingham LCJ said the claims arose out of transactions in which MXL had made a loan on the security of real property. In each case a dishonest solicitor had acted for both MXL and the borrower. MXL relied on a professional valuation which substantially overvalued the property. The purchase being financed at the valuation price had been immediately preceded by another back-to-back sale and purchase transaction at a significantly lower figure, closer to the true value.

In each case the solicitor dishonestly caused MXL to believe that the transaction they were financing was a bona fide

transaction at a genuine price, and paid out of the funds provided by MXL without authority and in breach of fiduciary duty. MXL obtained their mortgage security, but when the borrower defaulted and MXL repossessed the property they suffered loss, partly because of the overvaluation and an intervening decline in property prices.

Since the solicitor had been dishonest, and but for his dishonesty MXL would not have made the advances, the Law Society concluded that it had a discretion under section 36(2)(a) of the 1974 Act to make a grant. But it went on to say, in its decision letter of 6 June 1995, that while (MXL) made an advance of more than the property was worth, the function of the solicitor in acting for a commercial lender is usually to ensure that the commercial lender obtains an effective security for its loan.

The letter concluded:

this was not a case in which a solicitor had personally misappropriated money; the mortgage had been completed and (MXL's) security had been perfected. That the security proved to be inadequate was due to the poor valuation and/or to the fall in property prices. Consequently, whilst the solicitor's dishonesty was a cause of the loss, ... it was principally suffered in consequence of the overvaluation and the subsequent fall in the property market.

The judge held that the Law Society misdirected itself in law by regarding the duty of a solicitor in a transaction of this kind as being limited to obtaining effective security for the mortgage lender.

Their Lordships disagreed. The Law Society clearly accepted that the solicitor's dishonesty was in law a cause of MXL's loss. To say that the function of the solicitor in acting for a commercial lender was

usually to ensure that the lender obtained effective security for its loan was not to say the solicitor had no other function, and there was no reason to doubt that this was ordinarily the solicitor's main function.

The Law Society had always made it clear that the fund was first and foremost a source from which to replace money taken by dishonest solicitors for their own benefit. Their Lordships did not regard that as an unreasonable priority.

MXL had failed to show that the Law Society acted unlawfully in adopting and applying a policy which in effect disallowed claims where the lender's loss derived not from the failure to obtain security but from the inadequacy of the security when the lender came to realise it, whether such inadequacy was the result of overvaluation or decline in property prices or both.

Paul Magrath, Barrister

[illegible]

Police hush
let local
judges decide

[illegible]

Don't bank on it
 is The Royal Bank of Scotland
 proposes to introduce "retail"
 banking services on 21 January.
 This means we can rethink the
 of virtual bank charges as well.
RICHARD SANTERS
 People's Action, Chislehurst

Heseltine finds that the frontier has moved

Michael Heseltine's chagrin is understandable. The Tories have long been the natural party of British business. They aren't any longer – which is why Mr Heseltine, a formidable operator, is guilty not just of tactical error but a failure of political imagination all the more remarkable in someone whose own past views on UK plc and government intervention branded him definitely not "one of us". The Tories cannot see that history has moved on. It is a sign of genuine national progress that Labour lambs can sit down with business lions and that British business leaders are at last prepared to think about party allegiance for themselves and forswear that knee-jerk tribalism that too often in the past made the Institute of Directors, let alone City dining rooms, into outposts of Conservative Central Office.

Traditionally business did veer towards the partisan right. The City is dominant, and English bankers have, at least since the middle of the last century, associated themselves with a reactionary stance in politics. For too many of them, Montagu Norman is still a patron saint. British business's conservatism has of course also been conditioned by the rhetorical commitment of Labour to ending the capitalist system. In practice Labour governments have got on famously with individual business leaders, from Beaverbrook (a Cabinet colleague of Attlee and Bevin in the

wartime coalition) to Harold Wilson's industrialist chums. But the madness of Labour's turn to the left in the Eighties allowed the Conservatives to lodge the impression that business support for Labour was akin to the proverbial turkey voting for the festive season.

But only blind prejudice would deny that Tony Blair has sloughed much of Labour's historical skin. Meanwhile, out in the private economy, company directors (a hugely diverse bunch, which no amount of Institute of Directors' collectivism can amalgamate into a single voice) nowadays make pragmatic judgements about the parties. It is probably true that the "social consciousness" of members of Germany's *Mittelstand* is higher, and that Italy's small and medium enterprises are much more diverse in political allegiance, but evidence is growing that Britain's "business community" cannot be locked up in the blue column. Most businessmen probably prefer the idea of a Conservative government. But their support should not be taken for granted. Some businessmen have had fruitful dealings with Labour local authorities; others have enough political awareness to register the mighty presentational changes wrought by the Blairites. Either way they are quite capable of calling the shots on their own and concluding that it may even be advantageous to their cash flow to favour a party other than the Conservatives.



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This was the kernel of Michael Heseltine's mistake: to lambast the business members of the Institute of Public Policy Research's commission as if they were capable of being turned into party dupes. His attitude is redolent of an old-fashioned statism – business people are naïfs, children in matters of policy and politics who need the tutelage of a professional. Michael Heseltine likes it to be remembered that he made a lot of money as a publisher. True, but he has now been a professional Tory politician for far too many years, and his rant will rightly have been found offensive by many practising money-makers, who

think they can make up their own minds about which party they feel loyal to.

Those who consider the distribution of economic power within Britain's private sector peculiar may say that the historical connection between directors, Rotary Clubs, chambers of trade and local Tory associations is fixed. For those who like to model things this way capitalists – whether Anglo-Saxon or Rhenish – will tend to support the party of property and disdain the party of high taxation. But must the party of the left be an enemy of property or the party of high income tax? That certainly was not the guise adopted by Shadow Chancellor Brown on Monday. Look meanwhile at the other great example of Anglo-Saxon capitalism – the United States – and see that there need be no fixed relationship between those who run companies and make profits, and the party of the right. Both American parties are pro-business.

The Labour Party is not the Democratic Party – yet. Messrs Blair and Brown have – yet – to be tested in the crucible of office, fending off party demands while fiscal contingencies bubble mercilessly away. Down in certain constituencies the red flag flutters and attitudes towards profit-taking and enterprise are still antediluvian. A Blair government will have to master the trick of recognising the justice of employees' claims while continuing to distance itself from Labour's historical partnership with the trade unions. Labour's business education is incomplete.

But that is why Sir Christopher Harding, Robert Ayling et al must turn on their accusers and say: it is now that Labour's modernisers need all the help they can get, not in some hole-in-the-corner fashion, but up front. It is in the interests of British firms individually and British business collectively that political life should move away from the spite and confrontation epitomised by Michael Heseltine's characterisation of a pro-business and anti-business divide. When both parties are pro-business, it will be the quality of their policies that matters

– welfare into work, schooling, skill training, regional economic advance, research, all those areas of "deep investment" for which the state alone possesses the resources and time horizon. Thatcherism redrew the economic boundary: Labour accepts that. It is time to step up exchanges along that new frontier, which is why the Tory response to the IPPR commission will dismay perceptive business people as they look forward to political change with equanimity, if not outright enthusiasm.

HM Prison Ship Britannia

Here's a little reader competition. There's no prize, except the satisfaction of having bent your mind to a serious matter of policy. It is this. Can you think of a more purposeful way of spending the millions Michael Portillo wants to shell out of your pocket on a new Royal Yacht? To get you started... How about turning the present one into a prison ship? Or holding a continuous party on it in the middle of the Thames, starting on 31 December 1999 and finishing with a big bang a year later? If you can't think of anything more useful, then presumably we'll have to accept that buying a new Royal Yacht is the best idea the Government has had this week.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Police bugs: let local judges decide

Sir: How welcome it was that 44 Labour peers chose to ignore the advice of their own front bench on Monday evening and decided to vote for the Liberal Democrat amendment to the Police Bill, as well as for their own ("Howard attacks bugging 'shambles'", 21 January).

Liberal Democrat peers seek to require chief officers of police to receive the prior authorisation of a circuit judge before they cause entry to be made into people's homes and offices for the purpose of planting bugs.

The Labour amendment was also passed with Liberal-Democrat support, but it is far less satisfactory. Labour proposes that an authorisation to bug already given by a chief constable shall not take effect without the approval of a commissioner appointed by the Prime Minister. It envisages that there should be three commissioners for the whole of England and Wales, who shall be High Court judges or above. Prior approval is not required under the Labour amendment where it is not "reasonably practicable".

Labour should not make obeisance to the judicial hierarchy. I would be surprised if a quarter of the distinguished and eminent brother- and sisterhood of the High Court bench had ever met their clients in the comfort of the prison cell, or had dealt hands-on with the responsibilities of prosecuting counsel within 20 years of their appointment. The flower of commercial and civil practitioners do adapt surprisingly quickly to the conduct of criminal trials as High Court judges, but the Old Bailey is not their natural home.

The great wealth of experience of the criminal law and its practice resides in the circuit judges not just of that court, but of all Crown courts throughout the country. They live in the community where they sit as judges. They know the temper of the people, and have experience of their police forces.

Every day, they fulfil their role in holding the balance fairly between the interests of the public, whose protection is their immediate concern, and those of the accused individual before them.

Circuit judges are readily accessible at all times to police officers seeking an authorisation under the proposed Act. Toughened by practical experience, they are not noted to be soft on crime or criminals. The excuse that it is not "reasonably practicable" to go to London will frequently be made – it is foolish to suggest that High Court judges in London can make a better-informed, fairer or quicker judgment on an application for approval than local judges on the spot.

The Labour front bench should swallow their pride: their recent U-turn on this issue was made so hastily that they sought to save face with a hurried solution of their own. Failure to follow the Liberal Democrat lead in its entirety has produced a less practical and sensible response.

LORD THOMAS OF GRESFORD QC
House of Lords

Don't bank on it

Sir: The Royal Bank of Scotland proposes to introduce "virtual" banking (report, 21 January). Does this mean we can relish the prospect of virtual bank charges as well?

RICHARD SANDERS
Sleepe, Aston, Oxfordshire



Home birth favours fathers

Sir: After Jack O'Sullivan's sensitive article about fathers and the birth of their children (21 January), might I recommend "home birth" as an alternative?

I was my wife (a registered midwife) who first pursued the home route as a medically safe and mother/child-friendly alternative. After the birth of our first child I became convinced of its father-friendly qualities too. A safe delivery in the early hours was followed by cups of tea and a few hours' rest tucked up in our own bed together, before getting on the phone to announce the news.

I was immediately on hand for nappy-changing and winding duty, while my wife could concentrate on breast-feeding and recuperating. I felt I was right in on the action and yet not "in the way" (the common experience of fathers in hospital). Last month we had our third child – born at home, like the others. I thoroughly recommend it!

Dr MATTHEW DYER
Ashford, Kent

Pay Eurotaxes or lose jobs

Sir: No one could accuse the Adam Smith Institute of a devotion to logic. Their letter (18 January) condemns a common European currency on the grounds that some countries have the need to devalue from time to time, in order to compete and export their unemployment.

In the absence of this option, they will need assistance from other member states, funds derived

from taxation. In practice, all this means is that the more competitive areas of the Union have the option of paying a tax or losing their jobs.

HOWARD CHENEY
Shipston on Stour, Warwickshire

Sir: What is *The Independent* doing blaring out headlines like "Now Britain faces single European tax system" (16 January)? This language caters to a paranoid, Eurocentric fantasy according to which EU proposals are a series of schemes dreamed up by foreigners to impose on Britain.

In fact, any EU state might have something to gain from a development of this kind. EU countries are already suffering from their lack of co-ordination over taxation, which, in a context of capital mobility, weakens their power to tax revenues and profits effectively. The result has been a forced drift towards taxes on employment and sales.

Dr NOEL PARKER
Lecturer in European Politics
University of Surrey, Guildford

Our John

Sir: As an expatriate Gibraltarian, I take exception to your headline describing John Galliano as "The Englishman who stormed Paris" (21 January). He is the most famous expatriate Gibraltarian in the world, born in Gibraltar of a Gibraltarian father and Spanish mother.

MICHAEL BRUFAL DE
MELGAREJO
Fleet, Hampshire

Books vs the Internet

Sir: Nick Edmunds (Network, 20 January) does not mention when his time of 15 seconds to discover the population of Zambia using the Internet search engine Alta Vista started – presumably all switched on and fingers on the keyboard.

Reading this at the breakfast table I felt challenged, looked at my watch, got up, went across to a small number of reference books, chose *The Universal Almanac*, 1997, consulted the index, found page 531 and was informed that the population of Zambia was 9.4 million for 1995, returned the book to the shelf, sat down. Which took 45 seconds.

The printed page still has a lot going for it.
HARRY MACKLEY
Newcastle upon Tyne

Books vs Eng Lit snobbery

Sir: Colin Hughes's assertion that the Waterstone's top 100 books list was what he would expect to find on an "average middle-class shelf in a not-very-bookish home" pushes literary snobbery to its limits. The list includes some of the most original, thought-provoking and important books of our century such as *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Animal Farm*.

We should be praising the new accessibility of the GCSE syllabuses

he deplures. Being in my mid-twenties, I am of the generation which studied those novels and I remember the shocked appreciation of 16-year-olds who would not normally have delved into anything more taxing than *NME* or the back pages of the tabloids.

Most members of the literary community seem prone to decry the failure of the populace to read and appreciate great literature, but then turn their backs on a piece of work if it manages to achieve popular acclaim.

Do we want people to read? If we can encourage 16-year-olds to read *Animal Farm* – and even like it – that should be praised, not scorned.

PAUL SMITH
Manchester

You won't stamp out ecstasy

Sir: "Stop the pushers poisoning our children," said Michael Howard at the Conservative Party conference. The Public Entertainment Licensing (Drugs Misuse) Bill, published by Barry Legg MP, aims to do just that.

The fact is that the Government will not succeed in eradicating the consumption of and dealing in ecstasy. If people want to take ecstasy and dance all night, they will. If people want to sell ecstasy and make lots of money, they will. It is impossible to stamp out drugs.

However, it is possible to create a safer environment with the

minimum of risk for those who feel inclined to take ecstasy. Politicians are stupidly quick to reject "harm reduction" measures – free cold water in clubs, no overcrowding, good ventilation, chill-out areas and tablet testing. Introduce these and the risks will be reduced considerably.

VICKY MILES
(aged 16)
Stanford in the Vale, Oxfordshire

Trust overcame men's differences

Sir: I was chairman of the meeting described in Neil Lyndon's article "Man to man" (20 January). Mr Lyndon is correct to point to the ideological divisions within the group – the libertarians vs the moralists, to name but one – but that is the very reason why the meeting was significant and why I regarded it as a success.

Actions by men to protect the legitimate interests of themselves and their children have, in the past, tended to be weak and fragmented and attempts to forge sustained alliances have tended to fail through ideological divides. This was why I deliberately chose to avoid discussion of ideology, which Mr Lyndon saw as a deficiency. This was a large meeting of seasoned activists from many disparate groups and the fact that we managed to develop a co-operative campaigning strategy in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect without a single serious dispute forming was, to my mind, quite an achievement.

Dr JOHN CAMPION
Director, The Cheltenham Group
Mildhurst, West Sussex

Build a clock to mark 2000

Sir: I W Dixon's suggestion (letter, 20 January) that cities, towns and villages should erect millennium clocks gives me an idea. What we should do is have a Grand Millennium Clock Competition, in which anybody can compete to build interesting clocks designed for use in public places.

Competing clocks would form the Grand Millennium Clock Exhibition in 1999. At the closing ceremony, prizewinners would be selected, and TV cameras would record the clocks passing midnight. After this there would be a Grand Millennium Clock Auction.

ALAN ROBINSON
York

Palace drawings cost student dear

Sir: I am a foreign student doing an MA in fine art. During the Christmas holiday, I spent a few days in London visiting museums and galleries. I am impressed by the collections, the professionalism and the facilities (recorded hearing aids) in the National Gallery, National Portrait Gallery and the Tate. Best of all is that they have free admission.

On the last day I went to Buckingham Palace to see Da Vinci drawings. To my astonishment, I had to pay £3.50.

The collection came from Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel in 1630. During the civil war he left the country. In 1690 the collection appeared in Kensington Palace, probably presented to the monarch as a civil war trophy.

To pay £3.50 to see such a mysteriously acquired collection, which belongs to one of the richest women in the world, is appalling.

TAN KWAN-LIANG
Birmingham

Sir: You correctly note that business support of capital projects in the arts has suffered a major drop from £13.9m to £5.3m, which could indicate a problem for Lottery projects. ("Lottery Funding Threat", 18 January). However, the article implies that this figure covers all business sponsorship of the arts.

In truth, the arts sponsorship market is in an extremely healthy position, with overall business support of the arts standing at £79.8m – dipping only slightly from the previous year's record high.

COLIN TWEDDY
Director General
The Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts
London SE1

Crunchy sprouts

Sir: Since when were sprouts classed as a soft vegetable (report, 22 January)? In my home they crunch when gently steamed for 5-6 minutes, but I wouldn't touch the frozen ones that collapse to mush.

Maybe if more people took the time to select young, fresh vegetables and learned to cook them properly, children wouldn't turn their nose up – my three- and four-year-olds don't! Making everything taste like packets of crisps is not the answer; invest in a decent cook-book instead.

KAREN ILLINGWORTH
Manchester

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number.

Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk.

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analysis

TURKEY ON THE GREEKS

“We strongly hope that Greece and southern Cyprus will give up these intolerable provocations and come to their senses, because the Greeks know our nation very well... They saw the results of their efforts in 1922 and 1974.”
Necmettin Erbakan, Turkish Prime Minister

“Greece and the Greek Cypriot administration have based their policies against Turkey on a fanatic and hostile mentality, which can be described as an incurable illness.”
General Ismail Hakkı Karadayı, Chief of Turkish General Staff

“If they step on our feet, we in turn will step on both their feet.”
Turhan Tayan, Turkish Defence Minister

Europe's coming war over Cyprus

After 22 years of diplomatic stalemate, the world's most densely militarised confrontation zone may be about to explode, writes Tony Barber

May 1998, Europe is getting twitchy. Twelve months of stop-start talks on ending the division of Cyprus have produced no results. Now the island's internationally recognised Greek Cypriot government wants the European Union to keep its promise and open talks on making Cyprus a full EU member. Germany and other countries argue that the EU would be mad to absorb a dispute as bitter and complicated as that in Cyprus. Just as EU foreign ministers sit down over lunch in Brussels to thrash out what to do, word arrives that four Greek Cypriots have been killed along the Green Line dividing govern-

ment-held southern Cyprus from the Turkish-occupied north. The government, backed by Greece, retaliates by vowing to take delivery within a week of a batch of Russian S-300 anti-aircraft missiles ordered in January 1997. As a Russian-Greek naval convoy carrying the warheads and launchers edges towards the eastern Mediterranean, the Turkish armed forces swing into action. Troop reinforcements pour into northern Cyprus. Planes raid the Greek-built missile base near Paphos in south-western Cyprus. The Turkish navy prepares to blockade the island.

Greece declares Turkey's actions a cause for war and, angry at lukewarm EU support, invokes the secret defence clause of a recently signed treaty with Russia. Fighting on Cyprus spreads to disputed Aegean islands on Turkey's coastline. The United States warns Russia not to get involved. President Alexander Lebed, with Chinese support, tells the US to mind its own business. All three powers go on nuclear alert. Like Cuba, another island involved in a missile dispute 36 years before, Cyprus has brought the world to nuclear confrontation.

If the above scenario seems fantastic, bear in mind that much of it is already unfolding. First of all, the EU gave a cast-iron promise in 1995 to open accession talks with Cyprus, even though with hindsight some states regard the pledge as rash. “Anyone who wants to join the EU must know that the European Union cannot deal with the accession of new members that bring in additional external problems,” Germany's foreign minister, Klaus Kinkel, said last Monday. This is to lock the stable door after the horse has bolted. Knowing that EU membership talks must start by about mid-1998, and encouraged by Greece, the Greek Cypriots feel they can play hard to get on a Cyprus settlement. Without major Turkish concessions, they will demand that southern

Cyprus joins the EU on its own – a sure recipe for a crisis. Secondly, President Glafcos Clerides and Rauf Denktaş, the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders, may meet in spring to launch fresh peace talks. But even if such talks get under way – a big if – there is little reason to suppose they will be crowned with success. The diplomatic climate is too frosty, and both sides have a deeply entrenched belief that to blink first will be to lose. Thirdly, several clashes along the Green Line erupted last year, causing the deaths of four Greek Cypriots and one Turkish Cypriot. It was the most violent period on the island since the Turkish army's invasion in July 1974. Lastly, the Cyprus government says that the missiles it ordered from Russia will cost 200m Cyprus pounds (£250m) and will arrive in 16 months – May 1998. According to a government spokesman, Yiannakis Cassoulides, the deal does not include a clause allowing Cyprus to cancel the order. Turkey says that its armed forces will attack the Greek Cypriots if they deploy the missiles, whose range enables them to destroy planes in mainland Turkish airspace. Turkey has also talked of imposing a naval blockade of Cyprus. According to one Nato diplo-

GREECE ON THE TURKS

“From 1995, the Turkish armed forces have established as a national interest the changing of borders in the Aegean... They are making military preparations in this direction.”
Aldis Tsachadzopoulos, Greek Defence Minister

“Instead of concentrating on internal problems such as the lack of democracy and human rights, the Turkish government has pursued a nationalistic position towards Greece.”
Costas Simitis, Greek Prime Minister

“This visit [by Turkey's Foreign Minister to northern Cyprus] proves that Turkey cannot adjust to international legality... We denounce such actions. We believe they worsen the already bad climate.”
Dimitrios Reppas, Greek government spokesman



A Greek Cypriot climbs the Turkish flagpole in the buffer zone. Seconds later, he was shot dead by Turkish forces Reuters

the dangers. Indeed, many see Greece and Turkey, whose mutual antagonism long predates their alliance in Nato, as the most likely contestants in Europe's next war. Some Western experts believe that conflict may break out over other Greek-Turkish tensions, notably the disputed Aegean islands. This issue brought Greece and Turkey close to war in January 1996. Still, everyone agrees that the status quo on Cyprus is untenable, and that the atmosphere is distinctly more tense now than it was six months ago. UN peacekeepers report more frequent trouble along the buffer zone separating Greek from Turkish Cypriots. But to agree on the problem's nature is not the same as to agree on its solution. The peculiar feature of the Cyprus dispute is that it drags on even though most of the world thinks it knows what a settlement should look like.

In 1991 the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 716, which called for Cyprus to evolve into a “bicomunal and bizonal federation” – that is, a single state comprised of two politically equal communities. Mr Denktaş was not impressed. It is hard to believe that he will ever sacrifice his beloved Turkish Cypriot parish state, set up in 1963 but recognised by no country except Turkey.

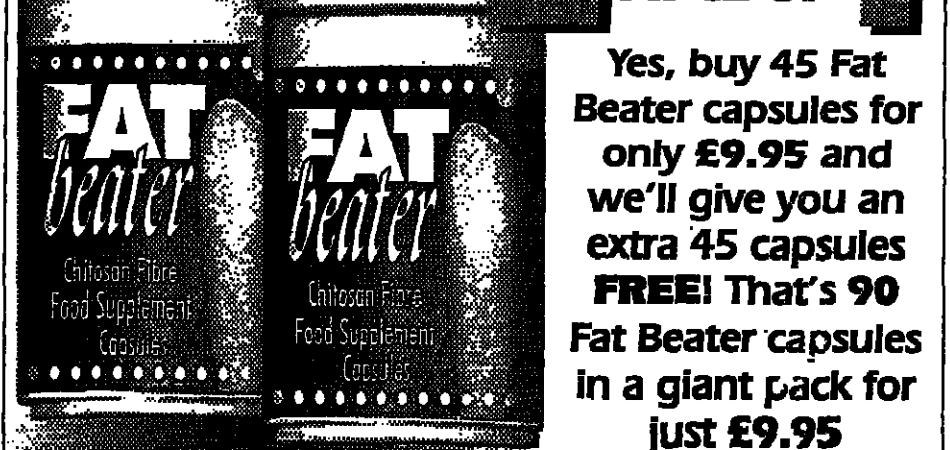
There are 30,000 Turkish troops in northern Cyprus, and the region's demography has been transformed by the arrival of large numbers of Turkish Anatolian settlers since 1974. They now make up more than 50,000 of the north's population of 180,000. All the evidence suggests that Turkey intends to remain in northern Cyprus for the long term. However profound their disagreements on other issues, Turkish leaders of all stripes – nationalist, military, liberal, secular, Islamist – show a remarkable unity of purpose over Cyprus, the so-called “national cause”. The key to a deal therefore lies in Ankara – at least, as long as the world believes that reunification must underpin a lasting settlement on Cyprus. Only Turkey can make the vital concessions that would make a reality of reunification. It would have to pull out

most or all of its occupying army, disband the rogue Turkish Cypriot state, remove Greek Cypriot territory and property, and much else besides. However, there is not the slightest reason to think that Turkey plans to do any of these things. Worse still, the ability of the US and the EU to persuade Turkey to make concessions has considerably diminished in the past year. Less receptive to US and European advice, Turkey is more inclined than ever to question the benefits of its allegiance to the Western alliance. This is partly because of frustration with the EU. Turkey introduced several important measures of political liberalisation in late 1995 to secure a customs union with the EU, but Greece has blocked the funds that were to flow to Turkey as a result. Turkey is fed up with European criticism of its human rights record and with those who say it should never be offered full EU membership. Turkey's alienation from the West has increased since the appointment last June of Necmettin Erbakan as its first Islamist prime minister since the Ottoman Empire's collapse. Much of his foreign policy has amounted to one long calculated snub to the West, particularly the US. He has found time to visit Iran and Libya, but he has kept clear of Washington and EU capitals. When the US said Turkey should stop threatening to attack the Greek Cypriots, Turkey denounced the advice as “beyond the limits of diplomatic courtesy”.

Turkey's relations with the West have rarely been trouble-free, but the recent downturn could hardly have come at a worse time. The Turks feel let down and taken for granted by the West, while the US in particular is increasingly alarmed at the erratic Mr Erbakan. In such circumstances, suspicions and misunderstandings can only grow – between Turkey and the West, Turkey and Greece, and Turkish and Greek Cypriots. The risk of war will rise, and the scope for pre-emptive diplomacy will shrink, unless the US and Europe make the gathering Greek-Turkish crisis their top priority.

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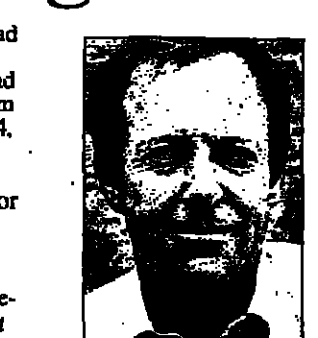


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The BBC is trying to kill its jazz listeners

I wish I had caught the edition of *Desert Island Discs* the other day on which Bruce Forsyth was the guest. From what little I have seen and heard of Bruce Forsyth, I think he probably has an interesting taste in music. I remember seeing him once in a TV programme about a top-flight piano tuner, who tuned the pianos of many po-faced classical performers. (He paid a visit for example, to the pianist whose name I can never remember – the one who is the spitting image of Roy Hudd – Alfred Brendel, that's the one – and when he had finished with Brendel's piano, he asked him to play a chord of C. Brendel sat down as if he were about to start a Beethoven recital and almost played with his eyes closed as he plucked a majestic chord of C out of it. Perhaps it is impossible for classical pianists to play even a scale without putting on all that agony.) Not so Bruce Forsyth, who rippled a few nifty chords on his returned piano, said it was very nice and launched into a funny story about Erroll Garner. It was the one big bright spot in the programme.

That is not why I wish I had caught him on *Desert Island Discs*. The reason I wish I had heard him lies in a letter from Simon Woolf of London SE4, who says: “Dear Miles Kington, “In case you are looking for more ammunition in your campaign against the BBC's woeful neglect of jazz, you might like to check out the return of Bruce Forsyth's *Desert Island Discs* on Friday. It was something of a surprise that Bruce's first choice was Bill Evans playing “Emily”, but even more of a surprise to hear (or, as my ears playing tricks on me?) the LP going round at 45 rpm...” Well, I am afraid Mr Woolf's letter got to me too late for me to hear the Forsyth repeat, so I cannot verify his suspicions. I could of course have telephoned the *Desert Island Discs* office to check, but past experience has not encouraged me to expect satisfaction. I once rang to inquire why they had played the wrong record on John Boorman's *Desert Island Discs* (Boorman had requested one jazz record and they had played a different one) and to ask whether the guest actually



heard the records he had requested, but they would answer neither question. What is odd is that this seems odd to happen to jazz records. Or at least it isn't odd if you subscribe to my theory that the BBC is doing it deliberately. The fact is, that jazz listeners are never satisfied. Faced with our complaints, the BBC has two options. To meet our complaints or get rid of us. My theory is that the BBC has adopted the latter strategy and is trying to kill off the troublesome jazz audience.

This is being done in two ways. One is to induce terminal fatigue by putting on *Jazz Notes* on Radio 3 at half an hour past midnight, so that anyone who wants to listen has to get up in the middle of the night and start ageing prematurely. The other is to induce sudden death in pedantic jazz listeners by making deliberate mistakes of a kind which they know will produce heart attacks. I am not just thinking of playing records at the wrong speed. I have noticed several other strange examples recently. I am thinking of an announcement in the *Radio Times* the other day that saxophonist Lester Young had made his debut in 1956. (It was actually around 1936.) I am thinking of Michael Rosen on *Pick of the Week* announcing with great delight that he was going to play a record of “Maple Leaf Rag” that Sidney Bechet had recorded with Louis Armstrong in 1924 and then playing a quite different record of the time that Bechet recorded nearly 10 years later in 1932 with Louis Armstrong nowhere in sight. I am thinking of the other

day when I did for once sit up late enough to catch *Jazz Notes* and heard Digby Fairweather back-announce a Benny Goodman record by saying it was a marvellous version of “Rosetta”. But it wasn't. It was a not particularly marvellous version of a tune called “Yardbird Suite”. Yes, Goodman did refer to the tune of “Rosetta” in the first chorus, but the rest of the time everyone else played “Yardbird Suite”, which has a quite different tune and a quite different middle eight, as Digby Fairweather would have known if he had listened to the record. Or if it was not so late at night that he too was half asleep and mistake-prone. Or if he had not been instructed, along with Michael Rosen and the rest, to slip in as many mistakes about jazz as possible to induce the sort of apoplexy that will kill off pedants like me. I warn the BBC. I have instructed my solicitor to sue them for millions of pounds should I be found dead in front of a radio. And, if I should die with a radio nowhere near me, to drag one over and switch it on.

striking between and T

Breakfast

Side jokes and fl...

صباح الخير

Striking a balance between Whig and Tory views

This has been a good week for the Lords and a bad one for the Commons. It was, in the end, the peers who forced Jack Straw to drop his unjustifiable support for a government measure that would have given policemen, and policemen alone, the statutory right to decide when to bug and barge in pursuit of their enquiries. Publicly – in that the peers, Liberal Democrat, judicial and those in the Labour Party like Lord Callaghan who could not be muzzled made a big fuss. Privately – in that it was Lord Irvine, Labour's Lord Chancellor in waiting and mentor to the leader, who played a pivotal part in seeing to it that Straw changed his mind before the issue was debated in the upper house on Monday. It is not too much to say that if it had been left to the House of Commons, Michael Howard's measure would have survived.



Donald Macintyre

Parliament's role involves more than Douglas Hurd's belief that it should 'sustain the executive'

that bad laws are too often rushed through whipped standing committees without alteration. He sensibly argues that Parliament would be improved if there were fewer ministers. He's right to point out that there must be something wrong with a government which has grown in numbers since it was running first an empire, then a command economy. It may not be literally true, as a Permanent Secretary assured me, that "80 per cent of the world's junior ministers are in the British government". But the indefensible exemption of the ministerial from the ruthless reduction in Whitehall's manpower serves only to reinforce government patronage, and silence dozens of the most intelligent and independent-minded MPs.

He is on less sure ground in suggesting that "Chief Whip" Sir Richard Scott and Lord Nolan may have "unwittingly" contributed to the deterioration of government and parliament. Maybe the post-Nolan regime on earnings disclosure will drive away some bright MPs. But which does more to damage the quality of MPs – that or the hopelessly ramshackle lottery of MP selection, not least in his own party? He may be right that Sir Richard was naive about the workings of government. But would the Government have been in trouble over arms to Iraq if it were not for the pervasive convention that on sensitive issues, departments answer parliamentary questions in the most contemptuously minimalist way they think they can get away with?

But Hurd's central thesis is also surely too benign. A government certainly has a fundamental right to get through the programme on which it was elected: properly used, whips lubricate democracy rather than merely impede it. The Commons needs a balance of functions to be healthy. It is a scandal that the whips' patronage extends to the select committees, and that departmental committees don't have more resources and powers. And that more standing committees don't have the power to call or witness – more freedom to divide on detailed provisions of Bills across party lines. You could even imagine a partial extension of the Salisbury doctrine (the convention which precludes the Lords from blocking legislation contained in a government's manifesto) to the Commons itself. It isn't too fanciful to think this would allow MPs to improve bad Bills without standing between a government and its mandate.

To its credit, the Thatcher government, learning from five years in Opposition, expanded the system of select committees when it was elected in 1979. Now Labour, if it wins, needs to take the Commons reform process further before it learns the bad habits of government. This is not to argue against Lords reform. Only to point out that the better you make the Lords, the more glaringly apparent will be the defects of the Commons.

In hot pursuit of the irrational

by Richard D North



Ban fox-hunting, one of life's great weirdnesses? Never. The hunters would only find something more threatening to do

On Tuesday night the burgeoning intellectuals of the Cambridge Union voted three to one in favour of fox-hunting. At Oxford's equivalent in 1995, it was two to one, so it looks as though the brains of Britain are lining up nicely with the outdoors set. It is unclear whether Melvyn Bragg is an intellectual, as opposed to an engaging *maitre d'* to the ideas of others, but this week *The Field* was clearly thrilled that the thinking woman's crumpet was on side and quoted him at length on his views in favour of hunting.

Mr Bragg has become an increasingly complicated and valuable liberal, especially whenever Cumbria is concerned. But he didn't stress the best reason for supporting hunting, and the cleverest. Life's absurdities are a weirdly necessary part of its charm. Even if hunting were bad in every way, it would be necessary to defend its glamour – its magical uselessness – against the killjoys.

Sensible puritans, who never understand anything much, have not even noticed that there is plenty of socialist pleasure to be had from the sport. Labour may try to ban hunting, but it far outbids taxation as the most efficient way of divesting the rich of their money while affording the rest of us the innocent pleasure of watching them break their necks.

But enough of puritans. Along with falling in love, bending the knee in prayer, and going to the opera, hunting is one of the few genuinely irrational occupations left to us. Of the three, it is the one most dignified (indeed defined) by extreme risk. Romancing, after all, does have some moments of solace. Church-going is for the risk-averse. Opera, like the others, offers high levels of barniness but far too little danger.

Hunting is not merely very risky, but it has the merit of confining the risk-taking to volunteers. In this it differs from war, motor racing or romance. People will go banging on about the fox's suffering, but this is absurd since God or nature has ordained a world in which foxes die hideous deaths anyway. At least a hunt ensures the fox dies on an adrenaline high.

Of course, any rational argument for hunting reduces its charm. Luckily there are very few. It is true that many of the countryside's small woodlands, and some of its hedges, have been looked after for the benefit they bring as cover for pheasants and foxes. But farmers

might learn to look after habitat because it is lovely. The real danger is in suggesting that there is an economic merit in hunting. To be profoundly irrational, and to maximise life-enhancement, activities should demonstrate a vast capacity for getting people's money out of their pockets and then seeming to waste it. In this hunting nearly matches gambling. Hunting is both popular and expensive and so the sums do get to be quite large. Janet George, press officer of the British Field Sports Society, says: "My rough count is that every fox killed by hounds sustains at least one full-time job and contributes to at least two others." The sum is fairly simply done, and necessarily imprecise. Hunts kill about a tenth, or 20,000, of the foxes which man

kills in the UK every year. The country's 189 hunts employ, on average, four to six people. Then there are the armies of people in the countryside who are employed by rich riders, or who work for businesses that look after horses at livery for the less rich. Janet George continues: "Livery costs £80-£100 a week, then there's shoeing every three to four weeks, at an average 35 quid a time. Every time the vet is through the gate it's £25. Let's say it's something like £5,000 a year for a horse, without the capital cost of buying it." She thinks perhaps 60,000 horses are kept in the country because of hunting.

One way or another, according to a back-of-the-envelope calculation done by Lord Onslow and me one winter's morning, every fox killed by a hunt has probably had expended on its demise something like £25,000, as it is chased by people the least of whom will have spent several hundred pounds on decent attire for the occasion. All this is without the cost of running a charismatic but decrepit Land Rover, which will do 10 miles to the gallon, when it's working at all, and tow a horsebox costing £3,000. "I don't think you can hunt for much less than £7,000 a year," says his lordship. Luckily, the money argument, which comes near to being boringly sensible, doesn't really help the cause. Here, hunting's likeness to war is useful. It is important to demolish the idea that the arms trade should be preserved because it provides jobs. This is not, in hunting's case, the issue (noted by among others Professor Paul Dunne, of Middlesex University) that

HMG spends more of our money getting the deals than the deals are worth. Rather, the argument turns on the belief that when people and their talents become detached from one occupation, they quickly create or attach themselves to another. The arms trade is no more necessary to the country's well-being than canals, steam engines, or twentines. Professor Colin Robinson, professor of economics at Surrey, and editorial director at the Institute for Economic Affairs, says: "What happens over time is that economies change and people find ways of doing things better and using less labour." Hunting is merely very inefficient pest-control and would on economic grounds be swept away. But the real point is that it behooves a bunch of reactionaries and romantics like foxhunters to argue in favour of Soviet-style job creation, or even good sense. If fox-hunting is banned, riders will switch to something more vulgar: say drag hunting, which is if anything more dangerous (because even faster than chasing foxes), though more predictable and less romantic. Riders are likely to fulfil the prediction of the risk analyst John Adams, who promulgates the view that everyone has an inbuilt taste for risk (and he might just as well have added: expenditure), which varies from person to person but cannot be circumvented. On this view, if you deprive a person of one avenue of putting himself at risk (or spending money), he will simply find another. So safer cars and roads simply produce worse drivers: though the cocooned drivers may be contributing to thousands more virtual accidents to unprotected pedestrians whose response is to stop walking about – which is what most pedestrians have done.

If hunting were to be banned, risk-seeking horsemen and women might take to the highway on Kawasaki. They might take up winter yachting (an idea that seems improbable only until you recall the nature of the activity whose banning causes us to hypothesise on the matter). They might decide to have exotic affairs instead of chasing foxes, and that would hugely increase their phone, restaurant and hotel bills. They might hunt abroad, which would delight the poor people among whom they despoiled. They would have to get their kicks and spend their money somehow and it might as well be here where we can delightly keep our eye on them.

Breakfast time, and he's full of fight

Feeble jokes and flat oratory aside, the Prime Minister remains formidable, says Andrew Marr

There was no interruption from a wild-eyed, air-stabbing member of another party. There were no hard questions. Among the scrambled eggs, smoked salmon and coffee, there was a great, murmuring omnipresent desire by hundreds of business leaders to be... well, to be convinced by John Major. They are his natural friends and their breakfast hour with him in London yesterday was, by comparison with what will come, an easy venue for the electioneering Prime Minister.

It did, however, provide a fascinating and useful foretaste of how Mr Major will campaign; what his main lines of attack will be, and the tone of voice he has chosen in trying to grapple with and pin down new Labour.

Let us begin with the voice. He was not then, and never will be, a silky or inventive orator; the jokes were almost endearingly lame, the sentences studded with redundant "most emphatically", and the rhetoric replete with classic, anticlimactic Majorisms ("deregulation is like wrestling with a greasy pig – there is always a lobby opposed to it").

But those of us easily distracted by the fleeting image of anti-pig wrestling lobbies are in a minority. These slight eccentricities of speech apart, Major was compelling, lucid, thoughtful and friendly. The nation may not yet be at ease with itself; but its Prime Minister most emphatically is.

The central theme was that Britain is experiencing a golden economic dawn. It seems clear that Major wants to fight on the economy first, and the constitution second. Economically, he wants to focus the country's mind on the remaining important differences of policy with Labour. Gordon Brown's emphasis on tackling youth unemployment will be met with Tory insistence on the connection between the higher joblessness in France, Italy and Germany, and the minimum wage. Continental protectionism, Mediterranean social costs and Britain's swollen share of inward investment were savaged and lauded as Major tried to convince us that we really are, this time, on the edge of economic rebirth.

Of course, incumbent politicians have been saying that for decades. With the exception of the Lawson hubris, economic success is perpetually declared to be "a real prospect", just around the corner or "beginning to dawn" – a



Business people in Birmingham join Mr Major's London breakfast yesterday News Team

benign, curly-haired golden Godot who never quite makes it. Yet Major is a good advocate and much of his case today is not really contested by Labour (or Brown would not have signed up to Kenneth Clarke's expenditure totals). On the other hand, like any good advocate, he ignored one half of the picture – our structural weaknesses, our underinvestment, the great swaths of failed and hopeless Britons. He was hot about the evils of job-killing minimum wage legislation, but strangely silent on the evils of poverty wages and exploitation.

The Prime Minister did not dwell on Gordon Brown's dramatic promises about income tax and VAT, merely noting – interestingly – that if the Tories won, there would be "relatively little tax changes in the next parliament". He did ask a series of detailed questions about the legality, scope and scale of Labour's proposed windfall tax – Tony Blair's men now have ample warning about one persistent Conservative line of attack, and should be preparing their answers.

I did not get the impression that Major wanted either VAT or income tax to feature much in the coming campaign, perhaps for obvious historical reasons. But that, if so, would represent a hugely significant tactical Labour success, vindicating Brown's announcement at the beginning of the week. This, so far as I can tell, would make 1997 the first Tory campaign since the war not to feature Labour's plans for income tax.

Major was not, however, implying that taxation generally wouldn't feature. He reasserted his pledge to concentrate on cutting capital gains taxes and inheritance tax and hoped to cut the basic rate to 20p.

But he emphasised that all this would come "only when it is affordable". Early Tory thinking in response to Brown's political coup on taxes seems to be to question new Labour's credibility, since the business cycle might mean taxes going up anyway, as happened after 1992. This is cheeky stuff. Once the Conservatives said Labour was irresponsible because it was the party

of high taxation. Now they say Labour is irresponsible because it is promising not to be a party of high taxes.

The other theme that Major wove in and out of his economic message was Europe. In a sense, for him, the EU and the economy have become a single message, with federalism and social protection the twin evils. Unlike, say, Michael Portillo or John Redwood, he describes the European question in economic and pragmatic terms. I don't think he mentioned the word "sovereignty" once.

For him, "national interest" is more about GNP than the grand sweep of Our Island Story. As to the true Brussels-baiter's fervid concentration on legal authority, European supreme law and all the rest, Major just doesn't get it. This must have comforted the businessmen, even if it depresses his Eurosceptics.

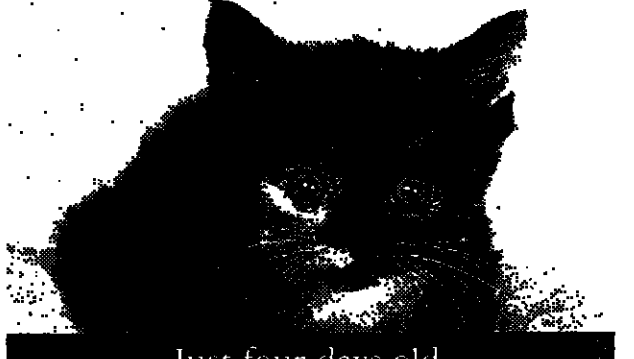
Partly because of the business audience, no doubt, Major said relatively little about the other big issue, political reform. But he was withering about Labour's proposal to turn the Lords into an elected quango. Far from the hereditary peers being Tory poodles, they had just defeated his government's proposals (on the Police Bill). This was something the Lords had not inflicted on him since – well – the day before. How would government be improved if the Lords were turned into a body appointed by Downing Street?

Fundamentally, I think, he is wrong on the Lords, just as he is deeply wrong when he suggests that Scottish home rule would be "the blue touch-paper" breaking up the British Union.

In the case of the Lords, there is a deep Tory majority available for the really important occasions, and there is the anti-democratic use of inherited voting to frustrate the Commons. He is right to mock Labour's half-way-House, the answer is either abolition or an elected, senatorial Upper Chamber. And when it comes to Scotland, it is the anti-change, anti-popular Tory diehard position which endangers the Union, not the moderate proposals of the reformers.

But this first real test of Major in electioneering mood was not a test of whether one agreed with his ideas or not – they are familiar enough. It was more a test of his ability to compress and project arguments in a compelling way – a test, in short, of whether he still "has it" as a campaigning leader. And he has.

Alone and dying



Just four days old, Moses had only hours to live

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Jazz listeners

There was a time when jazz was a serious music, a music that was taken seriously by critics and listeners alike. It was a music that was born in the streets of New Orleans, a music that was born of the suffering and the struggle of a people. It was a music that was born of the blues, a music that was born of the pain and the heartache of a people. It was a music that was born of the spirit, a music that was born of the soul. It was a music that was born of the love, a music that was born of the joy of a people. It was a music that was born of the life, a music that was born of the death of a people. It was a music that was born of the hope, a music that was born of the despair of a people. It was a music that was born of the faith, a music that was born of the doubt of a people. It was a music that was born of the belief, a music that was born of the unbelief of a people. It was a music that was born of the courage, a music that was born of the cowardice of a people. 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High street setback dampens fears of rate rise

Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

The prospect of a rise in interest rates before the general election has almost vanished after official figures yesterday showed that the volume of retail sales fell sharply in December. The surprise setback on the high street sent shares soaring to a record last night.

The sales figures were the latest in a series of statistics providing Kenneth Clarke with the

ammunition to resist Bank of England advice that the cost of borrowing should go up.

"The Chancellor is home and dry provided we do not see the pound weaken," said Leo Doyle, UK economist at Kleinwort Benson.

The pound, whose strength gave Mr Clarke the rationale for not raising base rates earlier this month, climbed further yesterday. Its index against a range of currencies gained 0.3 to 97.2. Sterling also gained more

than a penny to reach DM2.7142, within a few pence of the rate from which it tumbled out of the exchange rate mechanism in 1992.

The FTSE 100 index closed nearly 24 points higher at 4,219.1, having recovered slightly from earlier highs after Wall Street opened.

Although City economists still disagree about whether interest rates should go up, there was near-unanimity yesterday that any move would be postponed until after the election.

Only an extremely buoyant figure for GDP growth in the final quarter of 1996, due to be published on Monday, could tip the balance the other way.

December's retail sales performance helped the case against tougher monetary policy. The volume of sales fell 0.3 per cent during the month, although the estimated increase in November was revised to 0.9 per cent from 0.7 per cent.

Of last month's decline, 0.6 per cent was due to a sharp fall in sales of clothing and footwear following sharp increases in the previous two months. Sales in this sector remained the fastest-growing in the year to December, up 7.5 per cent, and discounts in the January sales could lead to a rebound.

Sales in "other" stores - mainly specialist shops such as chemists and jewellers - also fell and here was a small decline in non-store retail sales - mainly mail order - whose growth has

been slowing for some months. There were increases in all other categories. These were strongest in department stores and supermarkets. The volume of sales at foodstores increased by 0.4 per cent in December and 2.6 per cent year-on-year.

Tim Congdon, one of the Treasury's panel of "wise persons", said that one month's worth of weak data did not mean the case for tighter monetary policy had evaporated. "I would not put much weight on

the figures around Christmas. The inflationary dangers remain," he said.

But others were more doubtful. "There is now enough of a question about the pace of growth for it not to matter waiting a month or two," said Michael Saunders, an economist at Salomon Brothers.

The next monthly meeting between the Chancellor and the Governor of the Bank of England will take place on 5 February.

Windfall tax 'may see price controls loosened'

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Professor Stephen Littlechild, the electricity regulator, signalled yesterday that he might be prepared to loosen price controls on power companies if they were hit by Labour's windfall tax on the privatised utilities.

He told MPs at a Commons Trade and Industry Select Committee hearing yesterday that he would not relax the price caps affecting different elements of the industry, but he could take the impact of the windfall tax into account when deciding the next set of price controls.

Recognising the intense pressure utility regulators are likely to face from their industries if Labour wins power, Professor Littlechild said: "When the time comes to review controls, companies will put forward a whole series of arguments and we have to see what we make of them. But that situation has not arisen yet."

Facing repeated probing from Conservative and Labour committee members, he went on: "I cannot say what the implications would be because I cannot say what the companies would put to me. They'd have to persuade me that they could no longer finance their licence activities." Later Professor Littlechild confirmed ministers could veto his decisions.

The current set of price controls affecting the regional electricity companies' main distribution activities expire in 2000, while separate controls on their supply businesses, due to be opened to competition, will be renewed in 1998. The National Grid transmission network agreed a new price cap with the watchdog, Ofwat, which lasts from April until 2001.

The comments are one of the most explicit admissions yet by a regulator that the windfall tax, which the City believes could raise between £5bn and £10bn, could feed through to customer prices if the companies involved make a convincing case. Labour has consistently denied the tax would have any effect on consumers' bills, arguing that companies could absorb the cash demand by raising borrowing.

Professor Littlechild will also face equally fierce pressure from consumer groups after a Labour victory, seeking to head off any claims by the utilities that they cannot afford the tax.

Yvonne Constance, national chairman of the Electricity Consumers' Committees which advises Ofwat, warned: "We do not think customers should be paying windfall tax. If there is to be windfall tax it is intended to come from those who have made the windfall and that is the shareholders or new owners. We would watch most closely to make sure not a single charge is made against customers."

Toyota lifts hopes of rise in UK output

Michael Harrison

The prospects of a further huge boost to the British car industry were strengthened yesterday after the Japanese motor giant Toyota said European output would double to about 350,000 cars early in the next decade.

The plan puts Toyota's £1bn Burnaston factory in Derbyshire in prime position to build a third model to compete in the small car sector of the market against the likes of the Nissan Micra.

However, Toyota executives cautioned that the chances of the investment coming to Britain would be seriously jeopardised if Britain's increasingly Eurosceptic stance hampered its relationships with the rest of Europe.

Output from the Burnaston plant is due to increase from 117,000 this year to 200,000 a year from late 1998 when it starts production of a second Corolla-type model alongside the existing Carina E.

The increase in production will see the workforce rise from 2,300 now to 3,000. But if Burnaston is selected for a third model it would mean at least another 700 jobs and further investment of £200m or more and come as a further vote of confidence in the British motor industry following Nissan's decision to build a third model in the North-east.

Alan Marsh, vice-chairman of Toyota Motor Europe, said: "We would like to develop the product range to include a Micra-sized car and ideally we would like to grow Burnaston but a company like Toyota never closes the door. We are always evaluating the European market and it is in our interests to look at other sites."

The Burnaston plant is identical in configuration to Toyota's Kentucky plant in the US where production of the Camry and a people carrier called the Sienna is running at 400,000 a year.

Toyota's plan is to build 60 per cent of the cars it sells in Europe locally compared with 30 per cent at present.

Last year about 130,000 of the 412,000 cars it sold in Europe were built locally, nearly all of them Carina E cars from Burnaston.

The company, Japan's biggest car maker, plans to increase European sales to 600,000 by the turn of the century and wants more of those cars built in the same location as they are sold.

Further Japanese investment would help make up for Ford's decision to axe production of the Escort at its Halewood plant on Merseyside with the loss of 1,300 jobs.

Ford blamed the cutbacks partly on overcapacity but senior Toyota executives rejected this reasoning. "In terms of our sales plan we have a shortage of capacity," said Tatsuo Takahashi, managing director of Toyota Motor Europe.

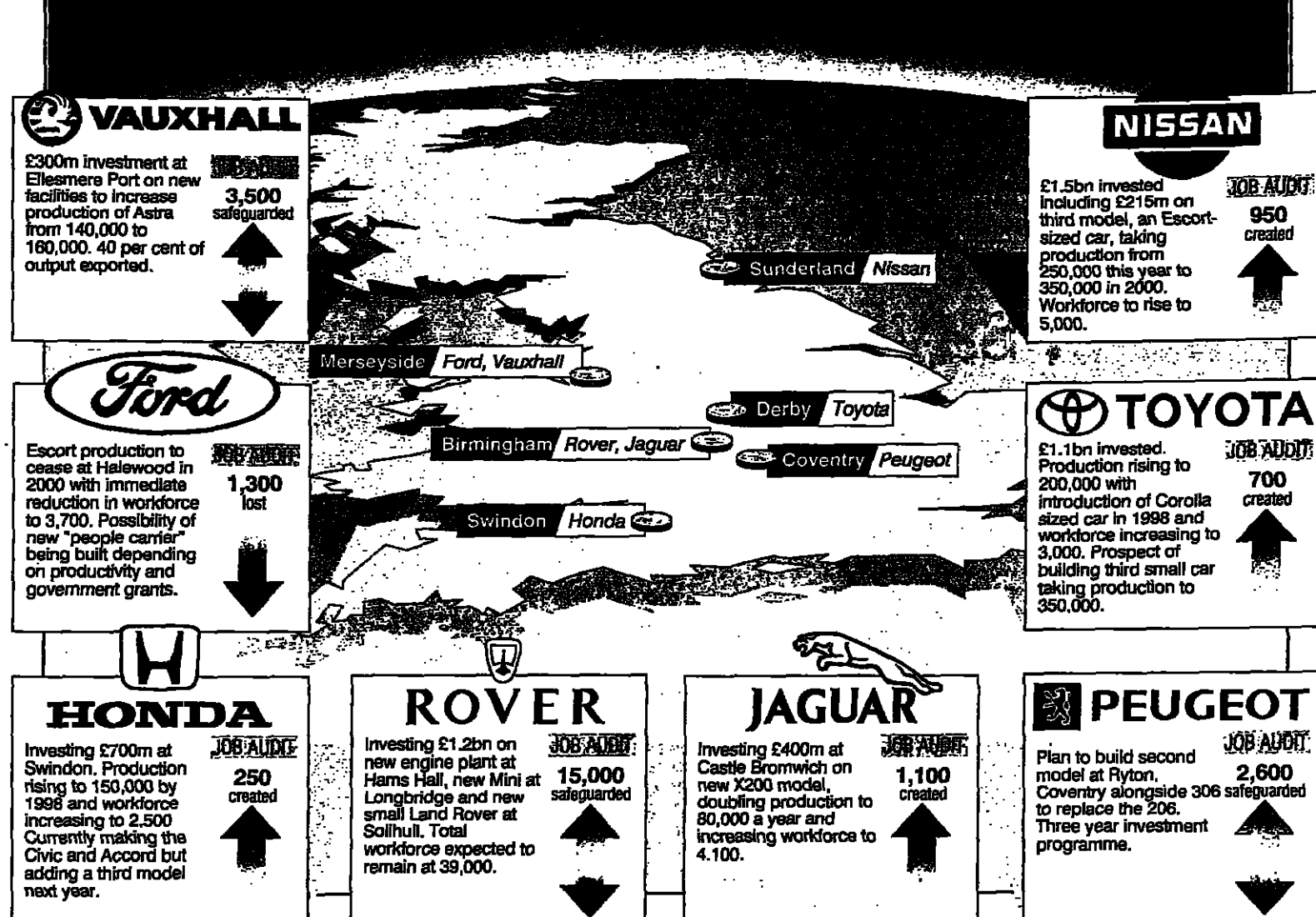
However, Britain's relationship with Brussels will be a key factor as the timing approaches for a decision on where to locate the new plant.

Mr Marsh said: "If the Eurosceptics win the day and drive us to a referendum on Europe and the public vote to stay out that would have very severe consequences for a manufacturing company like Toyota."

The Japanese car maker declined to become embroiled in the row over the support given by leading British businessmen to key Labour policies.

Comment, page 19

Reving up or reversing? Mixed fortunes for car makers



Call goes out for 2,000 in jobs scheme

Jill Tressnor

Co-Operative Bank yesterday announced a plan to get the long-term unemployed back to work, the most novel scheme among a raft of new job creation plans by industries in the North-west, South Wales, Northern Ireland and the Midlands.

Altogether, the announcements will bring 2,000 new jobs in a variety of businesses.

The bank, which prides itself on its "ethical" approach to banking, is targeting the long-term unemployed and "high-quality" short-term unemployed for 200 new jobs at its telephone banking operation in Stockport.

The Co-Op's call centre on the edge of the M56 in Southport opened last year and of the staff hired at the time some 30 per cent were previously unemployed.

Meanwhile, Parcelforce is creating the largest chunk of the 2,000 jobs announced yesterday as a result of a £100m investment in a new distribution centre in Coventry.

This is the biggest single investment by Parcelforce and will create 700 jobs, although it could cause some to be axed from other centres in Peterborough and Birmingham over the next three years.

In Northern Ireland, Shorts, the aerospace company, expects to create up to 600 jobs on the back of a new aircraft contract. Bombardier, the Canadian owner of Shorts, said

that the factory in Belfast would be involved in a new 70-seater regional jet.

Shorts will carry out design work and produce fuselages for the aircraft, which is due to take to the air by the turn of the millennium.

Meanwhile, in Merthyr Tydfil, south Wales, almost 700 jobs will be created at a new meat processing plant. Also in south Wales, Biscley Office Equipment, the UK's largest manufacturer and exporter of office furniture and equipment, is to create 150 jobs through a £10m investment programme to expand its factory in Newport.

In Merthyr, St Merryn Meat, which supplies meat to supermarket giant Tesco, announced

it was investing more than £25m to build one of the largest meat processing plants in Europe on reclaimed land. The company employs nearly 1,000 workers mainly in the South-west of England and plans to take on another 603 in Merthyr.

And separately across the border in Gloucester 100 new jobs will become available as a result of a £25m investment in a motor parts factory.

Gillian Shepherd, education and employment secretary, said: "We are reaping the rewards of a flexible labour market with no Social Chapter and no national minimum wage. Today's news is particularly welcome as it shows the benefits are being enjoyed across the country."

The new pensions regulator is to set up a telephone hotline for whistleblowing actuaries and auditors, who will be expected to report suspected problems in pension schemes.

The Pensions Act 1995, a result of the Maxwell scandal, will protect actuaries and scheme auditors who wish to give information on a confidential basis.

The Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority, which formally starts work in April, also made clear yesterday that it expected to be tipped off about a wide range of minor problems found in pension schemes.

Opra does not want its informants to restrict themselves to suspicions of serious wrongdoing such as fraud or to communicate only through lawyers.

Opra said this was so that it could use the information about minor problems to see if it could identify patterns of behaviour among pension schemes that had difficulty complying with the new pensions act.

A spokesman said: "We want to avoid a situation where the only things reported to us are

heinous crimes that are obviously breaches."

With more than 200,000 pension schemes to oversee and no powers to require annual reporting to the authority, "information and intelligence is the key", the spokesman said.

The whistleblowing line will be protected by Section 48 of the act, though if the information is to be acted on it will have to be followed up in writing and it can be an offence to give wrong information.

Opra said oral advice during discussions over the whistleblowing line should not be treated as a binding decision by the regulator, and would be "without prejudice" to any subsequent decisions made on the case.

To encourage constructive use of Section 48, Opra said schemes should be confident that isolated initial breaches of the act which brought no significant danger to members' pensions would "not, as a matter of course, lead to penalties".

The Institute of Actuaries and the Institute of Chartered Accountants both said they had yet to receive and study a copy of the consultation document.

Comment, page 19

Handicappeds' first step to society share bonanza

Nic Cicutti

A parliamentary bid to force de-mutualising societies to set aside funds for handicapped people who would otherwise be denied a share in this year's £15bn flotation bonanza received an unopposed first reading yesterday.

A private member's Bill by Douglas French, the Conservative MP, was backed after he told the House of Commons that it was wrong to stop handicapped people, who were second-named signatories on society accounts, receiving a share of the handouts.

Mr French said: "The first reading was very successful and I have received a lot of sympathy and support from both sides of the House. The second reading will be on 14 February."

"That might be a bit more difficult because there are other items of business on the agenda for that day, I am in the hands of others ahead of me on the day."

He said, however, that support for his measure had come from the Treasury, which is also trying to obtain parliamentary time for its own Building Societies Bill.

Mr French estimates that

there may be about 100,000 members of those societies about to seek a stock market flotation, including Halifax Alliance, & Leicester, Woolwich and Northern Rock, who would benefit from his measure, at a cost of about £10m to £15m.

"This is considerably less than the amount that societies have paid to City institutions as they prepared to float," he added.

"One wonders how it is possible that these same highly paid City institutions were not able to find a formula to allow such payments to handicapped society members."

Mr French's bid to obtain redress for certain types of society member comes as most societies have faced hundreds of thousands of calls from members who may be denied a share in the flotations.

Halifax Building Society yesterday said that staff working on its telephone hot line are handling up to 30,000 calls a day from members with questions about the flotation.

A Halifax spokeswoman said: "Most of the calls involve fairly straightforward questions from people who want to know how many shares they might be entitled to or when they have to

vote by, that sort of thing. We have said before, that with 8.5 million members it would be unlikely if we did not make mistakes. Just 0.5 per cent of mistakes would be enough to fill Wembley Arena."

Among those who are complaining about Halifax are Ian and Marjorie Strang, a couple who have been both borrowers and savers with the society for more than 10 years and hoped for a double dividend worth at least £1,600.

However, Halifax deducted the couple's mortgage payments from Mrs Strang's account on 31 December,

reducing her balance below the £100 needed to qualify for free shares, instead of the normal date of the first of each month.

Mr Strang, who lives in London, said: "I can't believe that they have done this and treated loyal members in this way. We are not rich and this would have been a nice little bonus. The society was never given authority to remove payments from our account on that day."

Gary Marsh, head of corporate affairs at the society, said last night that it would be wrong to comment on Mr French's bill while Halifax members were still voting on the existing proposals.

Actuaries get whistleblowing phone hotline

Peter Rodgers
Financial Editor

The new pensions regulator is to set up a telephone hotline for whistleblowing actuaries and auditors, who will be expected to report suspected problems in pension schemes.

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STOCK MARKETS				
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996/97 High
FTSE 100	4219.10	+23.60	+0.6	4219.10
FTSE 250	4587.00	+16.90	+0.4	4587.00
FTSE 350	2092.50	+10.90	+0.5	2092.50
FTSE SmallCap	2285.56	+3.14	+0.1	2285.56
FTSE All-Share	2065.27	+10.10	+0.5	2065.27
New York	6837.33	-46.57	-0.7	6837.33
Tokyo	18013.88	+655.72	+3.8	18013.88
Hong Kong	13682.79	-40.00	-0.3	13682.79
Frankfurt	3028.67	+51.96	+1.7	3028.67

INTEREST RATES				
Short sterling*	UK medium gilt*	US long bond	Money Market Rates	Forward Rates
8.50	7.5	7.5	1 Month	1 Year
6.50	7.5	7.5	3 Months	2 Years
6.50	7.5	7.5	6 Months	3 Years
6.50	7.5	7.5	9 Months	4 Years
6.50	7.5	7.5	12 Months	5 Years

CURRENCIES				
£/\$	£/DM	£/¥	£/A\$	£/NZ\$
1.72	2.71	160.00	0.68	0.58
1.71	2.70	159.00	0.67	0.57
1.70	2.69	158.00	0.66	0.56
1.69	2.68	157.00	0.65	0.55
1.68	2.67	156.00	0.64	0.54
1.67	2.66	155.00	0.63	0.53
1.66	2.65	154.00	0.62	0.52
1.65	2.64	153.00	0.61	0.51
1.64	2.63	152.00	0.60	0.50
1.63	2.62	151.00	0.59	0.49

OTHER INDICATORS				
Indicator	Value	Change	Year Ago	Unit
Oil Brent \$	22.33	+0.12	16.97	\$/bbl
Gold \$	359.95	-2.55	402.80	\$/oz
Gold £	212.21	-0.27	266.38	£/oz
RPI	154.4	+2.5pc	150.6	%
GDP	108.9	+2.3pc	105.7	%
Base Rates	6.00pc	6.75	-	%

مكتبة الامم

صوتنا من العمل

Our car industry looks different from Japan



COMMENT
Of the 700,000 cars that Toyota and Nissan could conceivably be building here early in the next millennium, three-quarters will be shipped to the Continent

The car in front is a Toyota, as they say grudgingly in Detroit these days. Ford's threadbare excuses for ending Escort production at Halewood were made to look even more worn out yesterday after another Japanese car maker dropped heavy hints about expanding further in Britain.

The official Ford line is that it cannot justify building its new Escort in three places because there is already surplus capacity in the motor industry and this would only add to it.

The view from Toyota City on the outskirts of Nagoya is rather different. There, they will cheerfully tell you, the picture is one of chronic undercapacity in Europe. Their plan is to sell 600,000 cars in Europe by the turn of the century – a shade under 5 per cent of the market – and to achieve that while remaining good citizens means more than doubling local production in the next five years.

The message from Nissan, which has just taken the plunge and confirmed plans to build a third model at its Sunderland plant, is much the same. The second model that Toyota will introduce at its Burnaston plant next year and the third model Nissan intends to build in the North-east will compete head-on with the Escort. That rather gives the lie to the idea that this is a segment of the market consumers are backing away from in search of something more exotic.

which has struggled to live up to its predecessors despite some monumental marketing back-up.

That is hardly Halewood's fault because Escorts built in Saarlouis and Valencia are no more popular. Where Merseyside can be faulted is in developing a reputation for poor quality in the 1970s and 1980s that dished away any hopes it had of ever becoming a major export business.

Of the 700,000 cars that Toyota and Nissan could conceivably be building here early in the next millennium, three-quarters will be shipped to the Continent. The only thing likely to spoil that happy picture is a disastrous lurch in a Eurosceptic direction. But if that happens, it will not just be jobs in Burnaston and Sunderland that are in jeopardy.

Football has its investment merits

The crisis at Millwall, the football club whose fans chant "No one likes us – we don't care" to opposing supporters, comes as no surprise to followers of these matters. Drifting along in a lower division with only average crowds and little television money to speak of is hardly the stuff of stock market excitement.

But while many of Millwall's problems are specific to the South London club, this week's developments may force a fresh

appraisal by starry-eyed entrepreneurs (Joe Lewis, he of Christmas fame, joined the hand-wagon yesterday with a £40m investment in Glasgow Rangers) and investors of the market's latest fashion sector. Up until now most have been playing a stock market version of fantasy football.

So just how good are these clubs – as businesses that is? The first thing to note is that the picture is mixed. Return on capital in some cases such as Manchester United and Tottenham can be very good – as high as 30 per cent. This is because money from television rights requires no real capital investment in the first place. Others such as Chelsea and Leeds have ratios of just 2 per cent.

Most City institutions are still very wary of investing directly in football clubs, tending to get involved only through tracker funds. They will be using the £150-£200m float of Newcastle United to reappraise their view. A small but committed minority, however, see them as classic "people businesses", such as advertising agencies and PR consultancies, and believe they should be valued on the same basis. Indeed football seems rather better at dealing with the tantrums of its star players than a great many other people businesses, judging by the Nicola Horlick fiasco.

Football, then, does indeed have some investment merits. But stock selection is the name of the game. And don't count on pay per view being quite the goldmine for

investors that some are expecting. More than likely the fruits of this new source of income will end up with the players rather than the investors. That's the problem with people businesses. The people have an awful tendency to demand a very large slice of whatever cake is going.

Pressure is on to blow the whistle

Client confidentiality and sheer timidity. Care among the reasons why in the past whistleblowing has been a no-no for actuaries and accountants. But for well over a decade, the pressure has mounted on them to do more than agonise and resign the account when they suspect something is wrong. Why don't they actually pick up a phone and tell somebody, is the recurring question.

The strongest pressure has come in the banking industry, where Johnson Matthey Bankers, BCCI and now Barings have embroiled auditors in lengthy lawsuits about who missed what in the accounts, and bitter recriminations about why they did not say anything at the time.

It was the 1987 Banking Act, written to correct deficiencies in the legislation shown up by JMB, that brought the concept of legalised whistleblowing to the auditing profession. And it was the wave of legal actions against auditors over the past 10 years that concentrated their minds on the

problem of what to do if fraud is suspected. Not that there has been any marked increase among auditors of whistleblowing. So far the profession's most decisive response to fraud has been the rapid development of plans to become limited companies or offshore limited partnerships, thus limiting their liability.

Now the actuarial profession is coming under renewed pressure to whistle blow too. The Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority is asking actuaries to report cases not just serious abuse, but the entire range of minor problems that actuaries and auditors discover within pension funds. It wants to use this information as a database that will in future allow it to identify the characteristics of problem funds.

Well, this is progress of sorts but it is a poor substitute for legislation. The 1995 Pension Act drew back from making all pension funds register and report to the authority on grounds of cost and complexity. Detailed regulation and reporting requirements were deemed impossible. The Act even omitted to make whistleblowing obligatory. So now we have this self-administered stab at the problem.

The trouble is that it is not in the cautious nature of actuaries and auditors to pick up the phone for every minor problem and tip off the authorities. This scheme might just work, but only if pension fund trustees make it their business to prod actuaries and auditors into constant communication with Opra.

Clyde not for sale under 135p, say key shareholders

Tom Stevenson
City Editor

Gulf Canada's £432m bid for Clyde Petroleum is set to fail unless the Canadian oil explorer increases its bid by almost a third to put a value on its British target of more than £550m.

It has emerged that key shareholders are unwilling to sell out for less than 135p, considerably above the 105p a share Gulf has so far tabled and well ahead of the current share price of 120.5p.

Ownership of Clyde is unusually concentrated with just four shareholders controlling more than 50 per cent of the company's shares.

Schroders, with 19 per cent, and PDM, which has 14 per cent are the biggest investors, with American Institution Capital and Norwich Union holding another 17 per cent between them.

Persuading those four would secure victory, while Wittington, the Prudential and CIN control another 13 per cent.

Including those holdings, the total stake of the seven largest

shareholders is 62 per cent. Commenting on the bitter war of words that has erupted between the two companies, one big shareholder questioned Gulf's decision to highlight Clyde's dependence on acquiring oil reserves rather than finding them with the drill bit.

"Gulf says that oil business has become a sellers' market in which the owners of oil assets are not prepared to give away value. In those circumstances why should I do so?" he asked.

He said it was possible to arrive at a valuation of between 140p and 150p a share using either Gulf's favoured net asset value approach or the cash flow model championed by Clyde and he indicated he would be unwilling to sell out for less than that range.

Another significant investor, who also preferred not to be named said he saw little point in accepting an offer at the current market price only to reinvest the proceeds in a similarly rated oil stock when he continued to value the track record of Clyde's management.

There is general agreement

among investors that chief executive Roy Franklin has shifted Clyde away from an unsuccessful exploration strategy towards profitable acquisition-led growth.

Both fund managers believe Clyde will soon publish an estimate of its net asset value from industry consultant Energy Resource Consultants that puts a basic price tag of 105p on its assets.

That compares with previous brokers' estimates of an average 76p and, with an appropriate premium for control, also implies an acceptable bid price of about 140p.

Earlier this week Gulf responded to two defence documents from Clyde with a strongly worded condemnation of Clyde's track record.

The document claimed that Clyde had eroded shareholder value, failed to replace reserves and displayed a "woeful exploration record".

Clyde dismissed the attack as "predictable rhetoric".

Clyde has until next Tuesday to complete its defence with Gulf given one more week after that to make a final offer.



Sir Peter Bonfield: Cut charges at BT to comply with the annual price formula set by OfTel

Telewest in £50m deal with Racal

Chris Godsmark

Telewest, the UK's largest cable company, yesterday pledged even tougher competition with British Telecom and BSkyB by announcing plans to invest £50m in developing a national fibre optic network in a deal with Racal.

The investment will link Telewest's regional cable franchises based around London, Bristol, the West Midlands, the North West, Tyne-side and Scotland by 1998, allowing many phone calls and cable television services to be transmitted without using the existing fibre networks of BT and Mercury.

Racal, the defence electronics group, chose to signing contracts to lease capacity on its BRT fibre network which it bought from British Rail two years ago for £133m. Of the total investment it is thought about £10m could flow through to Racal in a deal expected to last for 15 years.

The agreement will be seen as further distancing Telewest from some of the other cable operators that are in the process of merging with Cable & Wireless's Mercury subsidiary in a £5bn deal. Telewest is thought to have previously discussed joining the merger with Dick Brown, C & W's chief executive.

Stephen Davidson, Telewest's acting chief executive, also promised to offer a digital television service to cable customers by the end of this year, the same timetable as BSkyB. He said he was close to agreeing contracts with companies to make set-top boxes to access programmes.

Telewest yesterday said its total residential customer base had grown by 34 per cent last year to 768,755. The strongest increase in demand was for telephone services, rising 46 per cent to 627,009 customers, compared with 528,142 television subscribers.

Mr Davidson also disclosed that a decision was due soon on whether to appoint him as permanent chief executive. A board meeting held last Tuesday again failed to resolve the appointment.

Bell Cablemedia phone ads incur wrath of BT

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

British Telecom was last night heading for a legal clash with Bell Cablemedia over the cable operator's controversial new advertising campaign which attempts to lure potential customers with the theme: "Don't waste money – switch to cable."

The promotion, launched this week, includes posters in the East End of the capital reinforcing the price message with the slogan "British Telecom".

The phrase has incurred the wrath of BT's in-house lawyers, who are understood to have written to Bell Cablemedia warning that such claims are untrue, may be defamatory and could infringe laws on trademarks. A BT spokesman declined to say whether Bell would be served with a writ if the advertisements continued.

"BT reserves its position on

this issue until we've examined these adverts further," he said.

Bell Cablemedia refused to discuss details of the campaign or confirm the advertising slogans had been used on poster sites.

The dispute is the latest fallout from increasingly tough price competition in the industry. Cable operators are seeking to maintain their price advantage despite BT's aggressive cuts in charges to comply with the annual price formula set by the regulator, OfTel. At the same time BT, under the chief executive, Sir Peter Bonfield, has made price comparisons more confusing by introducing discount packages such as the Friends and Family scheme.

It also emerged yesterday that BT had abandoned a planned court case against AT&T, the US telephone giant, after claiming the American group's British operation had also used allegedly "misleading"

advertising. The decision to drop the action comes a month after a High Court judge refused to grant BT an injunction to prevent AT&T continuing with the promotional claims. AT&T had said on direct mail literature that it was 40 per cent cheaper than BT on selected international calls.

A BT spokesman said: "Failure to get the injunction showed how difficult it is to take action against someone even where there is an overwhelming case. Anyway AT&T has dropped the advertising claims and we are not ones to bang our heads against brick walls."

However, a spokesman for AT&T insisted the promotional literature had not been changed: "The reason BT has dropped the case is that after losing the injunction it was clear there was no case for us to answer. We are still using all the claims in our advertising that BT had objected to."

Horlick admits to ABN talks

Jill Treanor
Banking Correspondent

Nicola Horlick, the "superwoman" fund manager who has resigned from Morgan Grenfell Asset Management, admitted for the first time yesterday that she had held preliminary talks this month with ABN Amro, a rival firm.

Previously she had said that allegations about her moving to a rival firm had been sparked by a lunch she attended late last year with a close friend at ABN Amro.

MGAM is alleging that she breached her contract by attempting to solicit staff for a rival firm. She denies this and is considering whether to bring legal action against MGAM for "constructive dismissal".

She said yesterday that talks with ABN Amro were of an "informal and preliminary nature" and that at no stage did she provide ABN Amro with confidential information.

"The talks terminated several days before I was suspended," Mrs Horlick said. "My aim was always to keep the clients and the team together for the benefit of all."

Mrs Horlick, given her nickname for her ability to juggle a demanding social life and job, hit the headlines last week after her acrimonious departure.

The latter comment did little to quell rumours that she had been considering a management buy-out of MGAM's pension funds business. Her spokesman said she had never made such a proposal and that her acknowledgement of "informal and preliminary" talks with ABN Amro did not alter her previous stance.

IN BRIEF

• Cable & Wireless yesterday appointed the second member of the senior executive team to run its £5bn cable venture, C&W Communications, formed out of the merger of its Mercury subsidiary with Bell Cablemedia, Nynex CableComms and Videotron. Nicholas Mearns-Smith, chief financial officer of Nynex CableComms, is to be finance director of the new company when it is formed in the spring. He will join Graham Wallace, chief executive of C&W Communications, who left a job as head of Granada's restaurants division.

• Some traders at Credit Suisse First Boston, the investment banking arm of Credit Suisse, the Swiss bank, may have been awarded bonuses of more than \$20m after profits in 1996 were estimated to have doubled to about \$1.1bn (£665m) before tax. As many as 50 people in CSFB's bond department received bonuses of at least \$1m, according to unconfirmed reports. CSFB is expected to announce its full-year profits next month.

• The Court of Appeal yesterday dismissed an appeal brought by a network of independent financial advisers which had argued that the Personal Investment Authority (PIA) Ombudsman did not have jurisdiction to investigate it. The ruling in the Queen's Bench division means the PIA Ombudsman can investigate customer complaints against Steeds, a firm which was once part of the Burns Anderson Independent Network. Investors had complained about financial losses they suffered as result of business conducted by Steeds, the PIA said.

• Ian Byatt, the water industry regulator, yesterday outlined tougher rules governing the relationship between privatised water companies and their non-regulated subsidiary operations. The move follows an attack by Mr Byatt late last year on many of the 10 water and sewerage companies for failing to put contracts with subsidiaries out to competitive tender and their failure to clearly allocate costs between the regulated water businesses and non-regulated activities. The guidelines require the industry to put more emphasis on market testing of contracts and require companies to report transactions between associated parts of the group.

• IBM's stock dropped as much as 7.7 per cent yesterday after the world's largest computer maker reported lower-than-expected sales and earnings for the fourth quarter. IBM's stock fell 9 to 159 and accounted for 32 points of the 51.57 point drop in the Dow Jones Industrial Average. Earlier, the shares fell as low as 155. IBM said fourth-quarter profit rose 18 per cent, slightly less than expected, as a stronger dollar and weak demand in Europe hurt results. IBM said net income rose to \$2.02bn (£1.22bn) from \$1.71bn in the year-earlier quarter. Sales climbed 5.6 per cent to \$23.14bn from \$21.92bn.

• The European Commission has cleared Cadbury Schweppes to sell its 51 per cent stake in Amalgamated Beverages Great Britain to Coca-Cola Enterprises, which is controlled by Coca-Cola.

• The European Commission opened an antitrust inquiry into Boeing's \$13.9bn (£8.4bn) acquisition of McDonnell Douglas Corp amid concern the alliance would stifle competition. The EU's top competition official said. The purchase, announced last month, will make Boeing the world's biggest maker of military aircraft and bolster its leadership position in the civilian aircraft market well above its nearest rival, Europe's Airbus Industrie.

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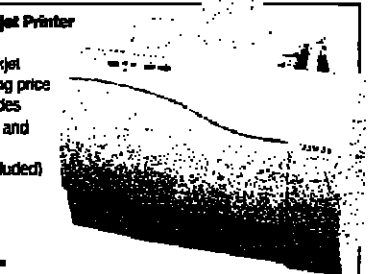
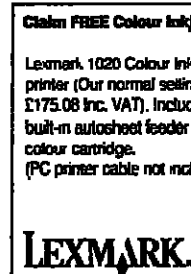
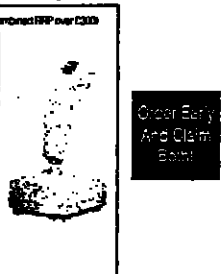
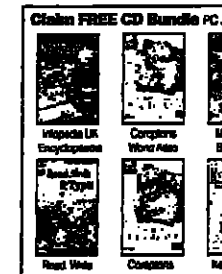
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TIME

business

Stakis bet and breakfast good value

Stakis's shares had failed signally since last spring to benefit from the improving outlook for both of its main divisions, hotels and casinos, and had been dull since the recent takeover of London's Metropole hotels and the £200m rights issue to fund the deal.

Yesterday's first-quarter trading statement was therefore seized on as a further opportunity for the market to continue the catch-up of the last few weeks. The shares closed 4p higher at 105.5p, usefully ahead of the 87p low reached in November.

The market chose to focus on an apparent turnaround at the troubled casinos division, where attendances in the three months to December jumped from 525,000 to 603,000, even if those punters were concentrating more on the machines than the tables and so spending less. Stakis's win percentage is also low by industry standards and winning customers back after the ill-conceived imposition of membership charges a couple of years ago has not been achieved with a higher cost base.

Still, the outlook for the gaming arm remains good in the long run. Deregulation, when it comes, will lift the number of amusement machines allowed in casinos, reduce membership restrictions and send the business down the more populist Las Vegas route, where 90 per cent of revenues come through machines, generating much more predictable earnings streams.

In hotels, stripping out the closure during the period of the Stakis Tyne-side's 147 rooms meant occupancy was stable at just over 72 per cent and the room rate pushed up nicely from £45.58 to £50.10. The Metropole hotels were only in for six weeks so the jury remains out on whether Stakis overpaid for them. Certainly the potential for improvement is there, with occupancy outside London a meagre 55 per cent, but a price tag of £227m for operating profits of £22.9m means the pressure is on Stakis to wring out cost savings and boost guest numbers. These caveats aside, the long-term outlook for Stakis remains strong. Deregulation should transform casinos into a mainstream, highly profitable and cash-generative leisure activity. In hotels, there looks to be plenty still to go for in the current trading cycle, with demand set to carry on growing and little new capacity to cope with those extra numbers. Demographic changes make the weekend leisure business an increasingly attractive opportunity.

On the basis of pre-tax profits to next September of about £59m, the shares trade on a prospective price earnings ratio of 15. That is not much more than a market rating, which compares with the much higher multiples given to

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

other companies. There is great scope in this business for small increases in achieved yield per room to translate into bigger increases in profits. With the outlook set fair for the rest of this year, the shares are good value.

Watson & Philip serves up a treat

Shares in Watson & Philip, the Dundee-based convenience store to food distribution group, seem to have been somewhat unfairly treated since a mild profit warning in October. Down from 466p, they recovered a chunky 50p to 392.5p yesterday on figures in line with the bottom end of previous market expectations.

If October's hiccup had never happened, news of an 11 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £20.1m on sales 16 per cent ahead at £577m for the year to 27 October would surely have been well received. They would also have made for a smoother transition for the new chief executive, Colin Glass, who was appointed from Dixons in the autumn.

But Watson has a good story to tell. The group has made a decent fist of moving out of cash and carry, a declining market, and into the more interesting areas of convenience stores and "food service".

The former, trading under the All-days fascia, is now the core of the group, raising profits by a quarter to £15.1m last year. The growth is coming from new store openings and raised margins, rather than organically, where an underlying like-for-like sales increase of 2.2 per cent looks pedestrian against the supermarkets. Driven by a novel equity-linked agreement for franchisees, Watson opened a net 89 stores last year and is planning another 150 in the current period, including 50 on Total petrol forecourts.

Operating margins, already up from 4.9 per cent to 5.4 per cent, have further to go as All-days drives out low-value-added groceries and household goods in favour of a range of convenience areas. Video rental, pizzas, Dunkin' Donuts franchises and dry cleaning are all being trialled or rolled out in parts of the 526-strong chain. Sales are running ahead of last year.

More exciting perhaps is food service, supplying food for restaurants, ho-

tels and the like, which jacked up profits 19 per cent to £4.03m on like-for-like sales up by a fifth for the third year running. Third biggest with a 4 per cent share of the market, W&P Foodservice should have plenty of room to grow as customers demand a more comprehensive national service.

Group profits of £24m this year, for a prospective multiple of 10, make the shares look good value.

JD Sports has impressive form

John David Sports may have been priced at the top end of expectations when it came to the market in October, but the sports retailer has more than justified the rating. Priced at 285p, the shares shot to a high of 346p within two months and have only recently come off their peak.

The driver of this success and of others such as JJB Sports and Blacks Leisure has been the spectacular growth of the branded sports goods market. Here in the fashion-conscious world of the younger generation, brands such as Nike, Reebok and Fila are the "must have" accessories.

JD Sports continued the impressive form with its maiden set of results yesterday. Pre-tax profits in the six months to 30 September were in line with expectations at £4.35m. This was after an exceptional charge of £650,000 incurred as a result of the Manchester bomb which damaged four of JD's stores.

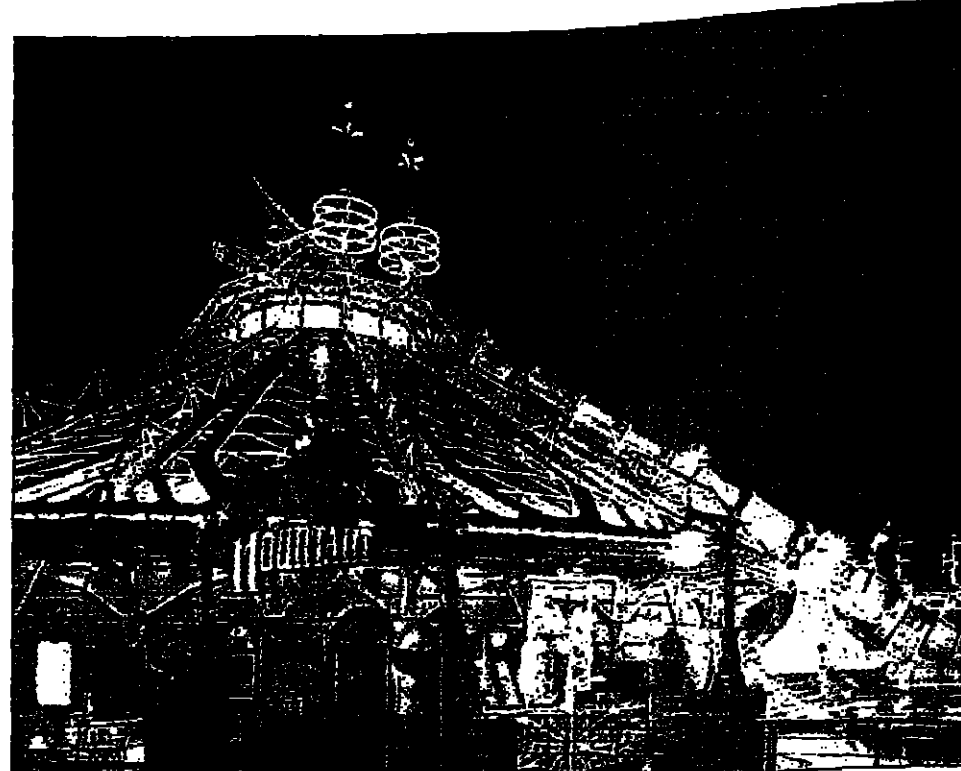
Like-for-like sales growth was strong in the half at 19 per cent. However, current trading has eased back to growth of 9 per cent in the 13 weeks to 31 December. Footwear went off the boil but was more than made up for by a good performance from clothing.

The rapid roll-out of the chain continues with 16 new stores opened in the first half and a further 12 opened since. One surprise was the shift to opening some stores out of town.

The nastier surprise came earlier this week when the OFT said it planned to investigate sports equipment suppliers which prevented retailers from discounting their products.

Though this could destabilise the sector, JJB has already said it does not expect to be affected by the investigation. JD Sports says that only a small proportion of its sales are of sports equipment so the impact should be even less. Even so, the shares shaded another 3.5p lower to 321.5p.

On MessPiersen's full-year forecast of £9m, JD Sports shares trade on a forward rating of 24 - high enough.



A mountain to climb: troubled Euro Disney admits it still faces an uphill struggle

Euro Disney sales show record rise

Magnus Grimond

Euro Disney, operator of the Disneyland Paris theme park, has shrugged aside French economic weakness and the Channel Tunnel fire to record a 12 per cent rise in first-quarter sales.

The news was well received by analysts and the shares rose 1.5p to 117.5p yesterday despite a reiteration by the company of November's warning that the current year would be difficult.

Philippe Bourguignon, chairman, described the sales increase from Fr1.01bn (£110m) to Fr1.13bn in the three months to December as "a satisfying performance, demonstrating our ability to better exploit the potential of our low season".

But, he warned, 1997 remained a challenging year with no price increases and higher financial charges.

The decision to peg entry charges for the current year at last year's level may have a "temporary detrimental impact on margins", the company said, but was aimed at further consolidating and strengthening the position of Disneyland Paris. In April 1995, the theme

park slashed entry prices by up to 22 per cent and was rewarded last year with a 9 per cent rise in visitors to a record 11.7 million, a trend that has continued into the first quarter.

The other problem facing the company this year is the gradual unwinding of a Fr1.3bn restructuring agreement which accompanied a Fr6bn rights issue backed by Prince Al-Waleed Bin Talal, the Saudi prince, in 1994. The ending of the standstill agreement with the group's banks has already seen lease and finance charges increase by Fr100m last year and the burden is set to grow by a further Fr200m or so in the current year, the company said. A further Fr100m will be added in the 1997-98 financial year.

Euro Disney said operating revenues for theme park and associated hotels rose 11.4 per cent to Fr1.12bn in the quarter. The growth was driven by higher attendances and a bigger individual spend in the park and an increase in occupancy rates in the hotels.

Nigel Reed, an analyst at brokers Paribas Capital Markets, said: "Such figures are encour-

aging. They are up by a bigger percentage increase than I was expecting for this time of year. But the first quarter is a seasonally low period, so any change has a big percentage effect."

He questioned, however, how much Euro Disney had had to spend to achieve these sales increases and suggested that the resulting Fr50m boost to net profits would be wiped out by the higher finance charges this year, assuming no other changes in costs.

Even so, he said he was now more likely to edge up his current estimate of Fr100m net profits for the group for this year. In November, Euro Disney reported a 77 per cent rise in net profits to Fr202m.

"On the face of it, this is encouraging news, but not enough to make the shares attractive. Earnings would still be just Fr0.1 or Fr0.2 a share, he said. "They have got to run to stand still and to stand still is not enough to support the current share price. They are still overvalued and I would be a seller." The shares peaked at nearly 763p in March 1992.

Lazards tops cross-border deals

Peter Rodgers
Financial Editor

Lazards topped the league table for cross-border bids and deals in Europe last year, but half of the top 10 were US banks, according to annual figures published yesterday.

The drive by US banks has been at the expense of UK banks and integrated European banks. Last year's total of Americans in the top 10 compares with four the year before. Some US investment banks, such as Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley, have spent the last decade building up their cross-border advisory work in Europe, partly to get round the dominance of local advisers in domestic deals

within European countries. The league table confirms the success of this strategy.

The US banks have "effectively a stranglehold on European cross-border mergers and acquisitions advisory work," said Philip Healey, editor of *Acquisitions Monthly*, which produced the data.

Lazards came top as a result of advising - jointly with the US bank JP Morgan - Carmaud-Metabox of France during a £3.3bn takeover bid from Crown Cork & Seal of the US, the largest cross-border deal of the year. Lazards finished in sixth place in 1995. In total it advised on 46 deals worth £13bn.

Second came Morgan Stanley of the US, with 26 deals worth more than £11bn, while

Goldman Sachs, first the year before, slipped to third with more than £10bn.

JP Morgan was fifth, from 11th the year before, Merrill Lynch was sixth and Lehman Brothers eighth.

Acquisitions Monthly counts Credit Suisse First Boston as an American investment bank, which it said was for consistency with its previous data, bringing the total of Americans in the top 10 to six.

However, a spokeswoman for Credit Suisse said CSFB was now Swiss owned and Swiss registered and should be counted as a European bank.

UK banks had a poor year in Europe, with only Rothschild making it into the top 10, at number nine. Schroders was

11th, a fall from fourth the year before, and BZW was 15th.

SBC Warburg, the Swiss owned group based in London, fell from second to seventh place while Deutsche Morgan Grenfell was 16th, after eighth place in 1995.

Société Générale was the highest placed French bank at 10th, whereas the highest in 1995 was Banque Indosuez at 20th.

Acquisitions Monthly said towards the end of 1995 Merrill Lynch paid attractive salaries to lure experienced staff from Wall Street rivals and from Deutsche Morgan Grenfell.

"The league table seems positive proof that digging deep into one's pocket to hire the right people can have an almost immediate effect."

Cross-border league table

Financial advisers on European cross-border transactions January - December 1996, ranked by value of transactions

Adviser	No of deals	Value £m
1 Lazards Houses (6*)	46	12,003
2 Morgan Stanley (3)	26	11,085
3 Goldman Sachs (1)	23	10,815
4 Credit Suisse First Boston (5)	22	9,980
5 JP Morgan (11)	29	9,386
6 Merrill Lynch (13)	13	8,236
7 SBC Warburg (2)	41	5,896
8 Lehman Brothers (9)	23	4,289
9 Rothschild Group (7)	25	3,907
10 Société Générale (-)	15	3,756
11 Schroders (4)	13	3,743
12 Baring Brothers (19)	14	3,216
13 Kleinwort Benson (17)	13	3,117
14 UBS (18)	10	2,491
15 Banque Paribas (-)	19	2,164
16 BZW (14)	5	1,987
17 Deutsche Morgan Grenfell (8)	39	1,767
18 Robert Fleming (16)	10	1,767
19 Hambros Bank (15)	6	1,160
20 NatWest Markets (-)	8	884

* 1995 full-year rating
The above table includes only those advisers acting on two or more transactions
Source: "Acquisitions Monthly"

Insurers fail to impress City

Magnus Grimond

Investors reacted unfavourably to new premium business results for 1996 announced yesterday by General Accident and Commercial Union, two of the UK's largest composite insurers.

Shares in General Accident slipped 18p to 801p, while CU was down 13p to 702.5p.

The slump came despite a 40 per cent rise in annualised new premium income to £184m for last year unveiled by GA, which said pension sales had doubled and all areas had improved. Annualised sales are calculated by adding all new annual premiums and 10 per cent of single, one-off premiums. Annual premium income soared by 101 per cent to £84.8m, while single premium income was up 12 per cent at £996m.

Meanwhile, Commercial Union revealed that annual premium income from its new 1996 life, investment and pensions business jumped 22 per cent as contributions from newer territories increased. New annual premium income rose to £253m, while single premiums grew a fifth to

£236bn. Total new premium income was 25 per cent higher at £289bn.

The figures are part of an improving trend for the UK insurance industry, which has been reporting better new premium income for last year on the back of growing consumer confidence and the reducing impact of regulatory and training requirements introduced in the last few years.

According to Peter Hale, assistant general manager of General Accident Life: "New business growth is well in line with our long-term growth strategy and has been achieved profitably across all business areas."

But analysts at Kleinwort Benson told clients to sell GA shares, moving them down from a hold recommendation, citing the strong price rise over recent weeks and the outlook for the industry.

HSBC James Capel said it was advising institutions running active funds to sell the stock because the shares were trading at 114 per cent of net asset value. It was giving similar advice on Commercial Union, now trading at 121 per cent of net asset value.

Scottish Highland Hotels profits fling

Tom Stevenson
City Editor

Scottish Highland Hotels met the forecasts it made at the time of last November's flotation, reporting pre-tax profits for the year to October of £2.13m, a 50 per cent increase on the previous year. The company's

shares, which were placed at 125p, closed 2.5p higher yesterday at 152.5p.

Hamish Grossart, chairman, said: "Following the successful listing of the company's shares, we are delighted to be announcing such a strong set of results. The current year has started well."

Scottish Highland's bumper profits followed a rise in the Glasgow-based company's occupancy rate from 73.4 to 75.5 per cent during the year and a jump in the room rate charged from £47.78 to £49.83.

Pro forma earnings per share rose 24 per cent to 10.3p and a dividend of 0.5p was

announced, although the company said it would have paid 3p had the shares been listed for a full year.

The successful flotation of Scottish Highland followed hot on the heels of the withdrawal of the planned flotation of Principal Hotels after a glut of hotel floats in 1996.

Who will top the premier league?

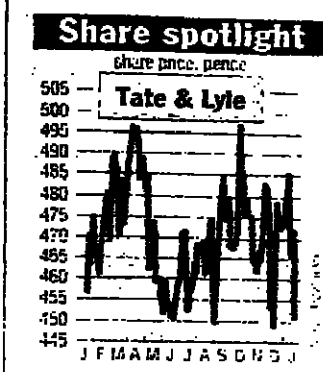
FT 500. Friday, January 24

Tomorrow the Financial Times will publish FT 500, our annual review of the world's top companies. This 48-page survey will rank by market capitalisation the top 500 companies in the UK, Europe, US, Japan and the world. You will find listings on the leading companies in Asia Pacific, Africa, Latin America, Canada, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. It will also include detailed comment and analysis from FT journalists world-wide. So, you'll be able to see at a glance who has gone up, who's gone down and who is in danger of relegation.

No FT, no comment.

market report / shares

Data Bank		
FTSE 100	4219.1	+23.6
FTSE 250	4587.0	+16.9
FTSE 350	2092.5	+10.9
SEAQ VOLUME	1.01bn shares,	
	47,426 bargains	
Gifts Index	95.35	+0.60



Profit downgradings leave sour taste at Tate & Lyle

Taking Stock

The bitter taste of profit downgradings untroubled Tate & Lyle. Rumours filtered into the stock market that the sugar group faced a profits shortfall following an unexpected fall in prices of high fructose corn syrup, a key ingredient in foods and soft drinks.

The decline has occurred at a particularly unfortunate time for Tate as it is thought to be negotiating supply contracts with leading US soft drink groups. NatWest Securities is believed to have cut its profit forecast by about 130m to 427m which would mean a 10 per cent drop in profits this year. Kleinwort Benson also turned negative. The shares, nudging 500p last year, fell 15p to 487p, the worst performance by any blue chip.

The Tate & Lyle slide was in sharp contrast to the rest of the stock market which was back in record-breaking form, ignoring, for once, weakness in

New York. Footsie rose 23.6 points to 4,219.1 and the supporting FTSE 250 index gained 16.9 to 4,587. Trading was again heavy with volume topping 1 billion shares.

There is a growing conviction that interest rates could remain unchanged until after the election. Confirmation that Christmas trading was far from robust merely strengthened the no-change stance.

New York, sharply lower during London opening, failed to have much impact. The fall, coming on top of another overnight peak, largely reflected the big sell-off in IBM as analysts scrambled to downgrade forecasts following disappointing results.

Vodafone, engaged in investment presentations, continued to dial the right numbers, gaining 15.5p to 270.5p. Orange added 8.5p to 200p.

Waters, paying little attention to Tony Blair's threat-



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

stock market reporter of the year

ened windfall tax, moved with the tide as UBS suggested they were 15 per cent underpriced. Thames Water surged 30p to a 655p peak, up more than 100p since November, and United Utilities rose 15.5p to 67p.

Other utilities were also indifferent to Labour's rhetoric. National Power plunged in a 17.5p gain to 519p and PowerGen 24.5p to 646p.

Genzyme was given another whirl on Roche takeover rumours, up 30p to 1,672.5p. SmithKline Beecham had the distinction of being dragged into the speculation, 22.5p higher to 843.5p.

Insurances, however, had a

subdued session. NatWest decided the time was ripe to take profits, taking a particularly bearish stance on Legal & General, off 4.5p to 282.5p, following new business figures. Goldman Sachs said buy Commercial Union, a suggestion which left the shares, after disappointing business figures, 13p off at 702.5p.

Hanson remained firm, 1.75p higher at 93.5p, as its energy demerger neared and Rolls-Royce, an SBS Warburg buy, gained 4p to 346p.

Banks had another resolute session with Royal Bank of Scotland celebrating its Internet scoop with a 6.5p gain to 585p. Fund managers attract-

ed attention following stories that Dresdner, the German bank owning Kleinwort Benson, was looking to buy a fund management company. Henderson Administration gained 32.5p to 1,277.5p and Mercury Asset Management 21p to 1,276p.

Jacques Vert lost some of Tuesday's exuberance following the Littlewoods link, falling 8p to 45.5p, but Verity, ahead of expected bullish comment on its new sound system, rose 4p to 33.5p.

Pan Andean, the explorer, gained 3p to 62.5p on seemingly incorrect rumours of a drilling statement was being prepared. The company, which is still examining data collected from last year's dry well, is preparing its interim announcement, which could be encouraging.

Kenmare Resources, which has found a rich gold seam at Niassa in Mozambique, firmed

to 35p; there is talk of a cash offer from BHP the Australian giant with which Kenmare has trading links.

Wickes, the struggling do-it-yourself group, perked up a little as some took the view the rights issue, due to close soon, was attracting a good take-up. The ordinary shares put on 5p to 166.5p and the oil paid rights 5p to 16.5p. Schroders acquired 4 million shares, lifting its stake to 16.47 per cent.

Critchley, an electronic component group, slumped 112.5p to 797.5p on the suspicion its margins were under pressure from the strength of sterling.

Thomas Jordan, the Cornish trouser maker, mini-conglomerate, jumped 7.5p to 46p. David Abell, who sold Suter to Ascot Holdings, has bought 2.8 per cent; investors connected with Mr Abell have a further 1.7 per cent. The former Suter chief has denied he plans a bid for Jordan.

Monument Oil & Gas jumped 8p to 80.75p. The shares, which normally change a copper at a time, were encouraged by a move into little-known Turkmenistan. With Mobil, the US giant, it will help develop the country's flagging oil industry. There are suggestions of huge oil stocks in Turkmenistan, with some talking of 6 billion barrels. One analyst calculated that if the reserves were 1 billion barrels it would be worth 35p a share to Monument.

Fishers International, firm at 14p, is attracting attention. The loss adjuster and claims manager is believed to be trading well and should produce profits of £1.7m last year with stockbroker Collins Stewart looking for £2.5m this. In relation to other financials the shares are not expensive.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield in last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Other details: 5 rights = 1 share; 1 share = 100 shares. Source: FT Information

The Independent Index

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UK Company News	02	Wall St Report	06	Electronic Shares	40
Foreign Exchange	03	Tokyo Market	07	High Street Banks	41

Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume
British Gas	30,000	ASDA	10,000	Barton	10,000
British Telecom	25,000	BT	10,000	BP	10,000
British Airways	20,000	BA	10,000	British Airways	10,000
British Airways	15,000	BA	10,000	British Airways	10,000
British Airways	10,000	BA	10,000	British Airways	10,000

FTSE 100 index hour by hour

Open 4214.5 up 20	11.00 4235.8 up 21	14.00 4244.4 up 19
09.00 4215.7 up 32	12.00 4232.2 up 27	15.00 4278.4 up 22
10.00 4221.7 up 216	13.00 4247.7 up 282	16.00 4281.1 up 236

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Stock	Price	Chg	Vol
British Gas	458.5	+	100	British Airways	100.0	+	100
British Telecom	250.0	+	100	British Airways	100.0	+	100
British Airways	100.0	+	100	British Airways	100.0	+	100
British Airways	100.0	+	100	British Airways	100.0	+	100
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British Airways	100.0	+	100	British Airways	100.0	+	100
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British Airways	100.0	+	100	British Airways	100.0	+	100
British Airways	100.0	+	100	British Airways	100.0	+	100

shney sale record rise

entry prices by up and was rewarded in a 10 per cent rise in the first quarter. But the first quarter saw a 11.7 per cent fall in the share price. The company is facing a problem of how much to pay for the acquisition of a 10 per cent stake in the Saudi oil giant. The company is facing a problem of how much to pay for the acquisition of a 10 per cent stake in the Saudi oil giant. The company is facing a problem of how much to pay for the acquisition of a 10 per cent stake in the Saudi oil giant.

surers fail to impress City

Insurance companies have failed to impress the City with their performance in the first quarter. The share prices of major insurers have fallen, with some down as much as 10 per cent. This is due to a combination of factors, including a rise in claims and a fall in premiums. The City is looking for a more robust performance from insurers in the coming months.

Companies will publish FT 500 world's top companies bank by market capitalisation in the UK, Europe, Asia Pacific, Africa, Latin America, Middle East and Eastern Europe. So, you'll find detailed comment and analysis on who has gone up, who's down and who's staying put. No FT, no comment.

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Halifax goes to ground to replace felled trees

This reaction is understandable. To many people on the left of the political spectrum it seems obvious that Britain is suffering from what the eminent economist John Kenneth

Year	% of Govt. sec.
1978	32
1979	35
1980	38
1981	42
1982	45

Perhaps they will succeed where Mrs Thatcher failed, given that the alternative – more public squalor and more private provision of key services – is so unappealing

Policy Studies Institute, argued in a recent paper, no householder or business would try to cut costs across the board like that. Rather, they would axe certain areas of spending altogether — cut out holidays, say, or pull out of one particular unprofitable market.

Mr Brown signalled this week that Labour will try this approach in the public sector. It will try to switch money from low- to high-priority

The difficulty, of course, is that to get there, you wouldn't want to start from here. No economist really believes the current spending plans are realistic, and any government is likely to overshoot them. Going beyond meeting tough plans to restructure spending will then involve slashing and axing entire social security spending programmes. Perhaps New Labour will succeed where Mrs Thatcher failed, given that the alternative – more public equality and more private provision of key services – is so unappealing. If it does, a Labour government will be far more radical than its fiscal orthodoxy suggests.

The province is at the heart of the country's grape-growing area, which already produces around 5,000 tons of grapes a year. A London-based spokesman for Allied Domecq says that have used the Cardinal grape to produce three new wines, all light and semi-sweet and designed to appeal to the Vietnamese palate.

"The first is a sparkling wine, the second a white fruity still wine, rather like Chablis, and the third is a red, which tastes a bit like Beaujolais Nouveau," says the

The Magill will continue his work at Westminster, where he was appointed Auditor to the Council in order to investigate the sale of three cemeteries for 15p and allegations of gerrymandering.

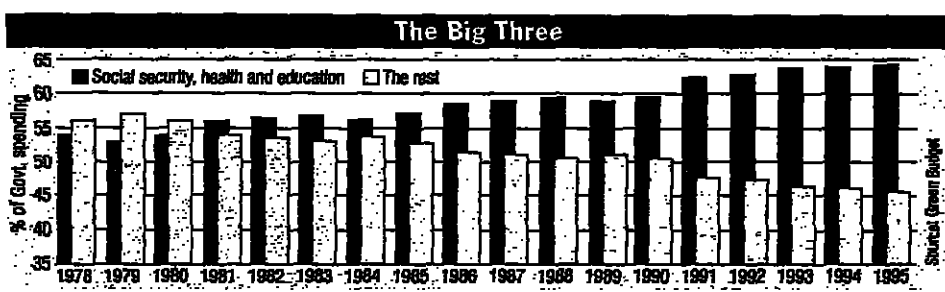
The Westminster probe, it looks at the moment, will run and run.

✓

Votes from the 89 council members of the ICA have to be in by 3 February, with the result announced two days later. Personally I'm backing Ms Masters, if only to pep up what is otherwise a notorious dull organisation.

An ICA insider tells me: "The boys are absolutely ter-

with KPMG who makes Nico-



Foreign Exchange Rates								
Spotling				Dollar			D-Mark	
	Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	Spot	1 month	3 months	Spot
US	16538	12-10	32-29	1000				06085
Canada	21216	54-16	64-68	13579	24-23		75-73	08764
Germany	27333	69-61	203-83	16407	30-28		80-87	10000
France	37523	117-58	64-68	62023	15-11		297-238	37355
Italy	26335	25-10	40-57	32654	24-28		90-90	97245
Japan	56562	86-91	42-36	78188	48-47		149-147	724581
UK	1357	23-17	64-68	1000	15-11		14-15	10000
Belgium	10590	15-10	42-36	33333	7-5		20-17	208214
Denmark	3234	222-77	655-56	62355	59-78		288-297	36786
Netherlands	1357	23-17	64-68	1000	15-11		14-15	10000
Ireland	10256	5-1	16-10	16225	6-5		10-5	9789
Spain	10825	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Sweden	2227	22-27	64-68	1000	9-10		10-12	837823
Switzerland	1222	220-16	630-880	63481	41-25		112-101	45373
Hong Kong	23540	65-78	230-232	14295	40-37		18-14	10000
South Africa	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
New Zealand	2227	22-27	64-68	1000	9-10		10-12	837823
Australia	1222	220-16	630-880	63481	41-25		112-101	45373
India	23540	65-78	230-232	14295	40-37		18-14	10000
China	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
South Korea	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Taiwan	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Thailand	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Philippines	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Singapore	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Malaysia	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Indonesia	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Brazil	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Argentina	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Chile	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Colombia	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Venezuela	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Peru	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Ecuador	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Guatemala	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
El Salvador	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Honduras	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Nicaragua	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Panama	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Costa Rica	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Dominican Republic	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Jamaica	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Trinidad and Tobago	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000
Barbados	10256	380-90	380-90	63481	50-25		70-68	10000

Interest Rates			
UK	6.00%	Germany Discount	4.50%
Switzerland	5.00%	France Discount	2.50%
Intervention	3.5%	Canada Prime	4.75%
Italy	7.25%	US Discount	4.00%
Spain	7.00%	Denmark Discount	3.25%
Netherlands	2.50%	Sweden Repo (9w)	4.00%
Advances	2.50%	Japan Discount	0.50%
		Belgium Discount	2.00%
		Switzerland Discount	1.00%
		Lombard	4.25%

Bond Yields				HSBC Markets Research					
Country	5yr	7yr	10yr	yield %	Country	5yr	7yr	10yr	yield %
UK	7%	7.07%	7.16%	7.41	Netherlands	5.78%	4.51	6.0%	5.54
US	6.75%	6.50%	6.25%	5.72	France	5.40%	4.50%	5.50%	5.61
Japan	5.5%	1.5%	3%	2.43	Italy	8.25%	6.32	6.41%	7.21
Australia	9.1%	6.90	10%	7.30	Belgium	6%	4.28	6.25%	5.79
Germany	5.0%	5.0%	6.25%	5.72	Sweden	5%	4.25	6.5%	6.61
France	5.5%	4.42	6.5%	5.60	ECU DAT	6%	4.60	7%	5.88

Yields calculated on local basis

from Bloomberg

Money Market Rates	
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Liffe Financial Futures						
Contract		Settlement Price	High/Low Today		Est/Conts traded	Open Interest
Long Est	(Mar '97)	71.00	71.38	71.05	11625	28713
German Govt Bd	(Mar '97)	10.80	10.92	10.82	22,222	227,290
10 Year Govt	(Mar '97)	10.80	10.92	10.82	1,600	10,000
10 Year Euro	(Mar '97)	10.80	10.92	10.82	1,600	10,000
3 Mth Sterling	(Jun '97)	80.45	80.47	80.33	33,333	104,000
3 Mth Eurodmt	(Jun '97)	36.88	36.96	36.82	33,333	278,514
3 Mth Euribor	(Jun '97)	36.88	36.96	36.82	45,454	356,400
3 Mth Euribor	(Jun '97)	36.88	36.96	36.82	45,454	356,400
3 Mth Euroyen	(Jun '97)	36.88	36.96	36.82	45,454	356,400
3 Mth Euroyen	(Jun '97)	36.88	36.96	36.82	45,454	356,400
3 Mth ECU	(Jun '97)	36.88	36.96	36.82	45,454	356,400
FTSE 100	(Mar '97)	4237.0	4237.0	4237.0	14500	61,623
FTSE 250	(Mar '97)	4620.0	4620.0	4620.0	14500	5782

Liffe FTSE Index Option					
Series	4150	4200	4250	4300	Call/Put Total/Vols
Jan	153.29	79.43	49.95	27.96	..
Feb	152.08	100.75	72.96	50.123	..

Industrial Metals				London Metal Exchange		
	\$/tonne	Cash	3 mths	Volume	LME Stocks	Chng
Aluminium HG	1954-05.55	1834-5	30773	953225	-	6526
Aluminium Alloy	1954-05.65	1825-30	1079	73820	-	470
Copper A	2508-10	224-4	57306	143522	+	20
Lead	1954-05.35	76-3	3367	16376	-	40
Nickel	7650-70	2875-70	1618	46554	-	222
Palladium	1954-05.35	616-75	3367	10305	-	200
Zinc	12625-75	147-4	30063	44-3003	-	200
Settlement Conversion:	£/\$	\$/DM	\$/¥	Stock volumes & changes in tonnes as at Tue 21 Jan '97		
exchange rate:	1.6532	1.0448	118.81			

Precious Metals						Spink & Sordani		
per oz troy	\$	£	Coltard	\$	£			
Palladium	356.75	215.56	Birmingham	374	227	Krugherds	351.662	212.242
Rhodium	325.50	200.50	Birmingham & Co	384	237	Sovak	351.6	212.4
Silver spot	488.75	283.40	Birmingham & Co	88	59	Motest	353.572	216.222
Gold Bullion	331.25	211.98	Birmingham & Co	50	30	Naples Ltd	357.134	217.222

Agricultural			CMS	
Grains	Coffees	Beans	Peas	Barley
Wheat	1000-00	1000-00	1000-00	1000-00
Maize	1000-00	1000-00	1000-00	1000-00
Soybeans	1000-00	1000-00	1000-00	1000-00
Groundnuts	1000-00	1000-00	1000-00	1000-00
Other Grains	1000-00	1000-00	1000-00	1000-00

Other Spot Rates

Country	Starling	Dollar	Country	Starling	Dollar
Argentina	16540	0.9989	Nigeria	132.588	801400
Australia	808678	1.5458	Oman	0.16369	0.13860
Brazil	104.07	0.0001	Pakistan	13.818	0.0001
China	17.2223	8.2184	Philippines	43.5382	263500
Egypt	525286	34030	Portugal	270.429	163520
France	16.6667	1.2529	Romania	10.8757	36407
Ghana	2983.319	173750	Russia	3229.14	597700
India	47.619	0.0001	South Africa	8.0575	50000
Indonesia	352.287	33.8500	Taiwan	45.5324	275200
Kuwait	0.1894	0.0019	UAE	6.0767	36735

	U-weight	U-day	U-month	U-quarter	U-semester	U-year
Interest	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Banking CDs	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Local Authority Depos	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Discount Market Depos	5%	-	-	-	-	-
Treasury Bills (90d)	-	5%	5%	5%	-	-
Dollar CDs	-	-	-	5.25	5.31	5.52
ECU Linked Dep	-	-	4.5-4.7	4.5	4.7	4.7

Tourist Rates		£ Buys	£ Buys	£ Buys
Australia (Aust)	2,0790	1,8800	New Zealand (Dollars)	2,2800
Austria (Schilling)	16,6500	2,2650	Norway (Kroner)	10,3300
Canada (Can\$)	54.4000	2,2650	Portugal (Escudos)	202.4800

Apr	16/05	14/7/11	19/1/11	5/2/06	--
Energy					
Brent Crude (2) (Siberia)	Gas oil (Siberia)	WTI	Products 1 (Siberia)		
Feb 22.41	23.00	21.95	Mar	Spot of 10W Euro	
Mar 22.41	23.00	21.95	Mar	Uninsured	
Apr 22.41	23.00	21.95	Apr	Naphtha	
May 22.41	23.00	21.95	May	ES Gasoil	
Jun 22.41	23.00	21.95	Jun	London Fuel Oil	
Vol 20861	Delta 22.32	Vol 191332	June 22.70	London Fuel Oil	
2008/09 through data. Vol: '08 price against average for '09p. Source: EBS-London Oil News. Prices prices					
Commodity Indices					
			GSCI Indices		
Index	2007-08	2008-09	% Chg	Vol	% Chg
Index	2007-08	2008-09	% Chg	Vol	% Chg
Index	2007-08	2008-09	% Chg	Vol	% Chg

LFFE	\$/tonne	LFFE	\$/tonne	LFFE	\$/tonne	LFFE	\$/tonne	ATA	\$/100
Mar	676	Mar	1580	Mar	9050	Mar	6200		
May	687	Mar	1545	May	9150	Apr	5630	Feb	22.90
Jul	692	May	1535	May	9180	May	5630	Mar	24.40
Vol	716	Vol	13275	Vol	627	Vol	88	Vol	n/a
White Sugar		Futlight		Wheat		Corn			
LFFE	\$/tonne	LFFE	\$/cwt	LFFE	\$/tonne	Corn CBOT		Corn/Heckard Seed	
Mar	29470	Jan	1908	Mar	6526				
Aug	29500	Mar	1980	May	6165	H-Lo	22720-26930	26870	
Vol	29640	Vol	280	Vol	65	Mar	27375-26800	27015	
Apr	3407	Index	263	Vol	65	May	26950-26300	26875	

Other Softs

rate quoted low to high are at a premium; add to spot rate
*Dollar rates quoted as reciprocals.
For the latest foreign exchange rates call 0891 123 3033.
Calls cost 50p per minute (day rate) 45p other times.

Greece (Dracmas)	216/0	Hong Kong (Dollars)	125/00	Spain (Pesetas)	216/500
Cyprus (Pounds)	0/750	Ireland (Pounds)	0/875	Sweden (Kronor)	115/70
Denmark (Kroner)	10/000	Italy (Lira)	2582/000	Switzerland (Francs)	2/2670
Holland (Gulden)	25/70	Japan (Yen)	195/000	Turkey (Lira)	152480/0000
Finland (Marks)	7/650	Malta (Liri)	0/6000	United States (Dollars)	16/290

Energy	1983=100	1,394.60	+0.04	231.23	+1.58	377.50	-6.37
Industrial Metals	1977=100	80.58	-1.98	85.86	-8.15	82.03	+28.90
Nonferrous Metals	1977=100	178.80	-0.51	168.79	+5.93	182.88	-2.22
Livestock	1970=100	190.57	-0.01	191.03	-0.19	175.01	+8.95
Precious Metals	1973=100	447.33	-0.22	463.54	-3.50	508.88	-12.06

†Close as of 21 Jan 1997

Unq	Maze (No.3)**	\$/tonne	unq	Feb/Apr	Soya Oil\$	FL/100kg	98.5
Jan/Feb	Capra (†)	\$/tonne	158.00	Jan/Feb	Coconut Oil (†)	\$/tonne	790.00
Mar	Corn (NY)	UScent/lb	74.30		Sunflower Oil	\$/tonne	
Feb	Wool	Acent/kg	720.00	Feb/Apr	Rapeseed Oil\$FL/100kg		98.5
Feb	Rubber*	Moent/kg	304.50	Feb/Mar	Groundnut Oil	\$/tonne	880.00

Origin: *Duch/EC - carry on; †Thailand; **Thailand; †Malaysia; ††Europe Source: †† Information/Trade.

[illegible][illegible]

Stock Prices					Stock				
Stock	Sell	Buy	7/16		Stock	Sell	Buy	7/16	
LA Small Cap Acc:	66.50	177.00	134		Accum Unit	82.00	82.00	82.00	
M & D Securities Limited					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
MSB House, Victoria Park	Chatterfield 343 178				Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
Customer Services Unit (Domingo: 01245 220000)					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
Quoted Company	50.00	50.00	50.00		Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
Market Units	66.60	73.40	0.35		Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
Asset Recovery	64.00	80.10	0.00		Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
Professionals rank formation as the most s information provider"					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
Annual Business Information Survey 1998, Headline Business Information					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
provides online information sources comprising 43 million of above 3.5 million securities on quoted companies.					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
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					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
Andrew Hunt on +44 171 825 8430, updates of our services, visit our website: info@ft.com					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
L L TIMES ation					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
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					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
Northway Plunk Unit Trusts Ltd Bathurst House, Regent Court, South Westminster, York WC2R 3HP (Telephone: 01753 555 2665)					Accum Unit (Dividend)	54.40	62.20	62.7	
Northway Plunk Unit Trusts Ltd Bathurst House, Regent Court, South Westminster, York WC2R									

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sport

'Trainers can talk themselves stupid but in the end it comes down to what the fighter can achieve for himself'

The last time I saw Richie Giachetti he was holding forth about the advisability of being first in an outbreak of hostilities.

Giachetti spoke from experience. A scar slanting down from the inside corner of his left eye is the result of being assaulted with a glass. "Swear to God, I didn't know the guy," I remember him saying. "He comes over, takes a glass and shows it into my face. I hit him. Then he pulls a knife and tries to stick me. Somehow, I got hold of the knife and stuck him three times."

Giachetti, who spent seven hours in surgery, learned that his assailant died in hospital. "The cops spoke to witnesses and decided it was justifiable," he said.

Another time, when standing up

for black friends in a Cleveland bar, Giachetti almost lost his life from a blow with an ice pick that went in just underneath his heart. "The doctor told me that if it wasn't for my muscle tone I would have died," he said.

What I am coming around to is the news, broken last weekend by *The Sun's* informed boxing correspondent, Colin Hart, that Giachetti will train Mike Tyson for an attempt, on 3 May, to regain the World Boxing Association heavyweight championship from Evander Holyfield.

A couple of days later, confident that the engagement would not deter Giachetti from exercising his mouth, I put in a call to Don King's training camp where he was conversing with Tyson. "So you are together again," I said, alluding to the

four contests Tyson undertook under Giachetti's supervision between losing the undisputed title to James "Buster" Douglas and a conviction for rape.

The main reason it was difficult to learn much about Tyson after his release from prison and before coming up against Holyfield last November was that all his fights were short. The performances raised suspicions of decline, especially in application and timing but it took Holyfield's victory to make them apparent.

Habits formed in Tyson under the concentrated drilling of his mentor, the late Cus D'Amato, were no longer evident. "Above all, Mike had stopped jabbing," Giachetti said. Central to the learning process in boxing, the jab as demonstrated by



KEN JONES

his work with the former heavyweight champion Larry Holmes is a Giachetti trademark.

"We need to improve on that, Mike's head movement, and get him throwing combinations again instead of trying to take guys out with one shot," Giachetti added.

The relationship between a fighter and his trainer can take more than one form. As long as it works they do not have to like each other. Before their acrimonious split, Tyson worked well with Kevin Rooney, probably because Rooney, to use an American expression, was always prepared to put himself in the fighter's face. "I guess they fell out a lot," Giachetti said, "but that's no bad thing if it gets results."

Tyson's loss to Holyfield confirmed the shortcomings of his corner men. As the crisis deepened, they had no worthwhile advice to offer. The impression was that they would not have found their way across the ring with a guide dog. "I don't want to get into that," Giachetti said. "I'm here to

do a job. I've sat down and talked about things with Mike, reminisced, gone over things we worked on the last time. It's probably more mental than physical. I'm not laying down a harsh regime; it isn't going to be a boot camp operation because Mike is at a time in his life when that wouldn't work for him. We'll put in some hard stuff, plateau off, then get going again."

The psychology Giachetti intends to employ is based on the detonation caused by Muhammad Ali when he beat George Foreman in Zaire to regain his title.

"Most everybody thought that Ali was finished, that George Foreman would put him in the hospital," he said. "But in knocking out George he became bigger

than ever. That's what Mike has to get into his head. So you lose. So what. It isn't the end of the world. It's for him to do not me. Trainers can talk themselves stupid but in the end it comes down to what the fighter can achieve for himself."

If the intellectual approach appears to fit uncomfortably on Giachetti's shoulders, make no mistake he is a genuine hard case. "I want to show you a trick," a young heavyweight in Giachetti's care said recently. "I'm not interested in tricks," the 56-year-old Giachetti growled. "I teach tricks to animals not fighters. If you don't do as you're told I'll hit you over the head with a baseball bat."

The unavoidable impression was that he meant it.

England's options depend on Cork

Cricket
DEREK PRINGLE
reports from Auckland

It will not have the dramatic appeal of the Australia versus West Indies clash going on in Adelaide this weekend, for that is a matter between the top dogs. Nevertheless, England's three-Test series against New Zealand, which begins here tomorrow, has a vital importance of its own, and both sides will be seeking the victory that is needed if cricket is to be kept from fading out of the public consciousness.

It is a problem that is more acute for Lee Gernon and his New Zealand side, who have long lived a stunted existence in the mighty All Black shadow. Very soon, rugby here will be year-round concern and cricket must make its impact now, if it is not to be confined to the domain of those things euphemistically described as alternative here in the land of the short, flat vowel.

For that reason New Zealand will be a dangerous side and one not averse to some bold risk taking in order to survive. Indeed last time England toured, five years ago, they deliberately prepared a damp green pitch at Eden Park to try to get back on terms after going 1-0 down in Christchurch. It backfired and they lost the series 2-0, but they have always risked much to win on home turf.

England's plight is perhaps not so extreme, despite the countrywide feeling that the one-day losses in Zimbabwe were something akin to Armageddon. But even if they were not, Mike Atherton and his men must restore faith by winning this three-match series. A task made more likely by winning here at Eden Park, though that will not be easy should Dominick Cork be unfit to play.

With all the bowling options revolving round Cork—who according to the England coach, David Lloyd, is being given until the morning of the match to declare his fitness—only the batsmen, who pick themselves, have been able to begin the mental preparation so vital to peak occasions such as these. England's build-up in New Zealand may have been close to

perfect, but it is never ideal if some of the bowlers are left wondering whether they will be pulling on spikes or flip-flops, come the morning of the match.

As ever, much will depend on the pitch, which has been cut from a re-laid part of the square that has seen just a single one-day game's play. At present the strip is well grassed and very damp, a result of it having been heavily watered on successive evenings: a suggestion that the groundsman is not confident of the surface holding together for the duration of the match. If that is the case, whichever team loses the toss can probably strap their pads on and prepare for a torrid morning session from seam and swing.

Cork's chances of being that first-morning tormentor are probably no better than fair.

First Test teams

NEW ZEALAND (probable): B A Young, B A Pocock, K C Peters, S P Fleming, N J Astle, C L Cairns, J C Vaughan, L K Gernon (wk, capt), D N Patel, S B Doull, D K Morrison.
ENGLAND (probable): M A Atherton (capt), N V Knight, A J Stewart (wk), N Hussain, G P Thorpe, J P Crawley, C White, R D V Cork, D Gough, C E W Silverwood, A D Mullaly, P C R Turner, D G Clark.
Umpires: S Dune (New Zealand) and S Burrow (West Indies).
Match referee: P Borge (Australia).

Mind you, he is a resilient person and if it will probably head an attack comprising Gough, Mullaly, White and Tufnell. If he is unavailable, England ought to take the plunge and play Andy Caddick, though there is a case (an unlikely one given England's traditional caution) for playing both him and Chris Silverwood should the pitch remain grassy and damp. Conditions that neither Darren Gough nor Alan Mullaly would perhaps use quite as well.

However, only a few days ago Atherton was still considering playing both spinners, although with the rider that Robert Croft would be the player favoured should only one eventually be required. That whole ethos appears to have changed from top to bottom with Phil Tufnell now looking the more likely to go solo and undertake a stock bowler's job into the wind.

It is a role the Middlesex spinner is well suited to and one he

probably does better than Croft, who is more aggressive, and therefore invariably more expensive in his probings.

Mind you, Tufnell's habit of retrenching, by going around the wicket and exploiting the rough outside leg stump, will not be as easy to fall back upon at Eden Park, with its strange angles and short leg-side boundaries, quirks the burly Inzamam-ul-Haq brilliantly exploited to see Pakistan through to the 1992 World Cup final with a whirlwind half-century.

Under Steve Rixon, the former New South Wales coach, New Zealand have raised their confidence and toughened their outlook. Historically, they have always outperformed their worth at home, though a recent drawn series in Pakistan suggests they have the bowling firepower to beat good sides.

Even so they will probably opt for the same make-up as England, and leave out the spinner Mark Haslam, who bowled just five overs to Dipak Patel's 19 in the trial match just finished. Instead they will look to attack England with the new ball swing of Danny Morrison and the gangly Simon Doull, with Chris Cairns as first change and Nathan Aslie for support.

Cairns could well be the pivotal figure of this series with both bat and ball, and much of the home side's chances of beating England lie on his not inconsiderable shoulders. He is the opposition's only really spectacular batsman, and if he performs, England's winter misery may well be compounded further.

Yet all the signs are that this is a different England side from the one skulking around Africa a month ago and there is no doubt that two storming wins in the last 10 days have made their Zimbabwean misadventure a distant memory.

Gone is the "just sucked a sour line" demeanour so prevalent in Harare. In fact we are almost back to the Mars bar ethic of "work, rest and play" that surfaced in the West Indies three years ago, prior to Ray Illingworth's reign as chairman of selectors. Then England's buoyant mood was due to the rude form of Atherton and Alec Stewart. A situation that, ominously, is only half true at present.



Special delivery: Simon Doull, the New Zealander who England's cricketers may yet rue encountering

Photograph: Graham Chadwick/Allsport

Never a dull moment with Doull

There are some people who, contrary to the laws of modern sport, respond to their calling in life later rather than sooner. Simon Doull, New Zealand's opening bowler, is one such person and although he is not old, at least not by county cricket standards, he has been around long enough and experienced enough malaises to make Chris Lewis seem like the indestructible man.

Injury has been the constant feature of Doull's Test career since his debut against Zimbabwe in 1992. First, it was a hamstring problem and then a snapped shoulder that held back his progress. Now, like the England captain, he has a degenerative back condition, though one currently held in check while he enjoys the salad days that usually follow when a man has the acumen to swing the ball both ways.

New Zealanders do not like

their heroes to be too fanciful and Doull, now aged 27, is not likely to disappoint on that front. Born in the Pukekohe, a farming area 50 kilometres south of Auckland, he has been described variously as "uncomplicated" and an "unvarnished country lad."

However, according to his New Zealand team-mate Chris Cairns, he is the life and soul of the social committee on tour and completely dedicated to karioke and crowning a combination that means he appears to know the lyrics to every pop song ever likely to be aired in a public place.

Such ephemera suggests a distracted mind and Doull was indeed drifting when Steve Rixon, the recently appointed New Zealand coach, began to form an unlikely alliance with him. Rixon, an uncompromising Australian used to winning things with his beloved New

Derek Pringle on the bowler set for a swinging time with New Zealand

South Wales, suddenly began to make inroads into the bowler's impenetrable interior, something both his predecessors—Glenn Turner and Geoff Howarth—had failed to do.

The results have been remarkable and Doull has gone from someone who first learned his trade in a tent (which is how the more uncharitable describe indoor cricket) to a bowler with the potential to win Tests.

He has done it through a combination of working hard on his fitness (the even trained with a rugby league team when he played for Pudsey in the Yorkshire League) and by learning to swing the ball both ways by adopting a smoother action.

Although not as quick as Dominick Cork, his 6ft 4in frame gets him more bounce; a handy acquisition when you have a slip cordon waiting for the edge. He has an action not dissimilar to Worcestershire's swing bowler, Phil Newport, except that his bustling run-up has been described by David Lloyd as being like a cross between Gladstone Swill and Merv Hughes.

Without a ball in his hand, Doull looks not unlike a stretched version of Andre Agassi: his severe crewcut and sparse goatee beard having apparently been cultivated to rid others of the perception that he is some kind of softie. It is an image he now takes with him off the field as well, and one of his Northern Districts team-mates reckons he drips more gold than a pimp when in civvies.

However, he certainly struck the motherlode on the pitch recently in Lahore, when he took

3 for 85 in New Zealand's win over Pakistan. Apparently he swung the ball so much that day that Pakistan provided a different ball for the following match.

Richard Hadlee believes he bowls deliveries that will get anyone out, and that he has benefited from not trying to bowl too many different types of balls, an optimism that still afflicts Darren Gough from time to time. The recent death of his mother forced him to withdraw from England's game against Northern Districts last weekend. Had he played, England would not have romped home as comfortably as they did.

Just as crucially, however, England's batsmen did not get that vital sight of him either, and as they as anyone will be waiting to see if the real thing matches up to the video nasty they have all been studying for the past couple of days.

No strife comes to the Streif

Skating

Norway's Atle Skjardal recorded the fastest time in an accident-free World Cup downhill training run on the demanding Streif piste in Kitzbühel, Austria, yesterday.

The 3,200 metres long course with a vertical drop of 860 metres, considered one of the most difficult on the Alpine ski circuit, surprisingly claimed no victims on a sunny and mild day.

Last year, Norway's overall World Cup champion Lasse Kjus and the Austrians Andreas Schifferer and Josef Strobl all had to be airlifted to hospital with concussion after crashing heavily during training.

It was a different story yesterday, when the racers were pleased with conditions on the Hahnenkamm mountain, which will have a two-run sprint downhill tomorrow and a regular full-length downhill on Saturday.

The weather was not as kind to the women downhill skiers as fog forced the cancellation of their two training runs in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy, yesterday. The organisers postponed the World Cup race until tomorrow, with the training runs today.

Woosnam determined to enjoy his new image

Golf

ANDY FARRELL
reports from the Gold Coast, Queensland

It may come as a surprise to the competitors in the Johnnie Walker Classic that they are involved in an event during which "old stereotypes will be challenged and new images produced". Co-sanctioned by both the European and Australasian tours, the tournament has been nominated as a part of the British and Australian governments' newIMAGES programme.

"We were approached by the British Government to launch the newIMAGES programme and we are honoured the Johnnie Walker Classic has been chosen to be the first of many sporting, cultural and economic interactions between Britain and Australia in 1997," Steven Foxcroft, of United Distillers, said.

Presumably the Ashes Test series next summer was ruled out on the grounds that the image of Mike Atherton holding up the Old Urn is considered too unlikely. That said, yesterday's opening ceremony fea-

tured the Gold Coast branch of the Highland Flingers, the Roulettes, cousins of the Red Arrows, plus a couple of scantily clad Aboriginal gentlemen.

Jan Woosnam may like to know that it was the top man, the Prime Minister, John Major, rather than Ken Schofield, the executive director of the European Tour, who was behind the circuit's opening event moving from its traditional Asian setting to Australia. "I think it is a long way to travel," Woosnam said, "but if you want to win the Order of Merit, you've got to do it."

Woosnam, the defending champion, is free of the back problems which prevented him challenging Colin Montgomerie for the money list title at the end of last season. "My bad back is something I have to learn to live with. At the end of last year I had three weeks in a row where I had problems and it felt like giving everybody else a three-shot lead."

"When I was younger I could play through the pain, but now it is better to accept that I will have problems, make the most of it and enjoy myself. My swing will last a lifetime, so if I can stay off the beer, I might do all right for plenty more years."

Fred Couples, a fellow back sufferer, reported no complaints after his trip from the West Coast of America, but John Daly, following only his second top-10 result since winning the 1995 Open at the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic, did not play in the Pro-Celebrity Shootout at Hops Island yesterday.

Daly has a recurrence of a hip injury with a slight infection, but will be ready to tee off tomorrow. "It started bothering me two or three weeks ago and then again on the flight over, but I'm taking pain-killers and I've been told I can't do any more damage by playing," he said.

Among the television and sporting stars who did appear were David Campese, Tony Greig and Wayne Gardner. Montgomerie was partnered by Mark Phillips and his son, Peter, the Scottish schoolboy rugby union international. Phillips Jr is on a working holiday for the promoters IMG, helping put up the fairway roping.

Without doubt the most pleasant image so far this week was of Ian Baker-Finch, who has made one cut worldwide since August 1994, as a winner again, albeit with the help of three partners in Tuesday's pro-am.

Lewis has learned his lesson

Boxing

Lennox Lewis says will not allow Oliver McCall to repeat what he called a "lucky punch" when they meet in a world title rematch.

The British fighter is determined to make amends for the second-round knockout he suffered against McCall in September 1994. "I looked at the tape a couple of days after the fight and I realised Oliver McCall had his eyes closed when he landed that punch [a right to the jaw]," he said. "There's no way he can get lucky again."

Lewis admitted he had contributed to his own downfall. "I committed myself and exposed myself, and he was able to take advantage," he said.

The Lewis-McCall rematch on 7 February at the Las Vegas Hilton will be for the World Boxing Council title that became vacant when Mike Tyson was stripped of it after he chose to fight the World Boxing Association champion Bruce Seldon. Tyson stopped Seldon in the first round, but lost the WBA title when he was stopped in the 11th round by Evander Holyfield. Tyson and Holyfield have a rematch on 3 May at Las Vegas.

Future of game rests solely in clubs' hands

Rugby League
DAVE HADFIELD

Professional clubs are having it spell out to them that they must finance the development of the game in their areas out of their financial allocation from Rupert Murdoch's Super League.

A strategic development plan from Rugby League headquarters puts the responsibility for the game in established areas squarely on the shoulders of the clubs, leaving the central governing body to concentrate on expansion elsewhere.

"They will be expected to provide equipment, personnel and targeted funding (from the News Corporation distributions and/or from Sportsmanhood sponsorship deals) for the strengthening of the foundations of the game in their own vicinities," the plan about the role of the clubs says.

Clubs should really need little persuading of the benefits of this approach, although, at a time when the professional and amateur sides of the game may be edging towards reunification, some amateurs may remember the pre-1973 era when clubs were meant to carry out these

responsibilities and failed badly in the task.

Boundaries will have to be drawn to separate clubs' spheres of influence. The two clubs out on a limb, Sheffield Eagles and London Broncos, are being told to concentrate on the areas covered by the East Midlands and Southern Counties development associations.

Other proposals in the plan include turning the Alliance competition into one restricted to under-21s and abolishing the restrictions on ex-professionals in the amateur game.

The chairman of the Australian Rugby League, Ken Arthurson, is retiring for health reasons. Arthurson, 67, has led the ARL's fight against the attempted takeover of the game by Super League and his departure further weakens their resistance.

In the last three months, the ARL have lost a crucial court case and seen their chief executive, John Quayle, and now Arthurson retreat from the fray.

Last week, Kerry Packer's Channel Nine, Arthurson's main ally in his battle, announced that they had struck a deal with Super League, leaving Arthurson to wonder aloud whether it was worth carrying on. He has clear-

ly decided, in view of the strain involved, that it is not.

London Broncos have confirmed they will share the Stoop with Harlequins this season. Harlequins, who borrowed Gary Connolly and Robbie Paul from league this winter, have a capacity of 10,000, which the Broncos' chairman, Barry Maranta, hopes to strain to the limit for their season opener, against the champions, St Helens, on 16 March.

Great Britain's captain, Andy Farrell, is over a thigh strain and will lead the national squad in the World Nines in Townsville, Australia next weekend.

TODAY'S NUMBER

16

The number of Ethiopian footballers who yesterday asked for political asylum in Rome. The players were missing in the Italian capital on Sunday, en route for an African Nations Cup game in Morocco.

97%	22.1	100	140	Unsettled
95%	22.1	115	260	Unsettled
96%	22.1	50	250	Unsettled
100%	20.1	50	130	Unsettled
100%	20.1	70	2500	Variable, snow
100%	20.1	50	120	Variable, snow
100%	21.1	20	110	Cleaning
100%	21.1	60	290	Improvement
95%	21.1	140	155	Snow
95%	21.1	135	165	Sunny

Shed will put one back.

3

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completing a difficult triple axel linked with a triple toe loop. Andrei Vlasenko, a former Latvian skater for Germany, sprang a surprise by taking third place, with French favourite Philippe Candeloro fourth.

The Russians Alexei Yagudin and Olympic champion Alexei Urmanov, who missed his combination, held fifth and sixth places followed by the Ukrainians Evgeny Pluta and former champion Dmitry Dmitrenko.

The Briton Steven Cousins, fourth last year, managed only 10th place, six positions ahead of his team-mate Neil Wilson whom he must beat here to earn his country's only place in the World Championships in March.

Hot list to E Schall 15-21 9-21; G Schwarz lost to J Schopp 6-21 6-21; N Denton lost to C Botchner 21-19 14-21 10-21; Hot and Denton lost to Schall and Schwarz 21-23 5-21.

Tennis

AUSTRALIAN OPEN (Melbourne) Men's singles, quarter-finals: T MUSTER (Lat) bt G NANNING (Aus) 6-4 6-2 6-3; P SAMARIS (US) bt A COSTA (Esp) 6-3 6-7 6-1 3-6 6-2.

Women's singles, quarter-finals: M-J FERNANDEZ (Lat) bt V van Roost (Bel) 7-5 4-6 tie; M HINGS (Swi) bt I SPURLEA (Rom) 7-5 6-2.

Women's doubles, semi-finals: L DAVENPORT (US) and L RAYMOND (US) bt L NEALAND (Lat) and H SUHWOVA (Cz Rep) 7-5 6-3.

Thomas Cook

TODAY'S FIXTURES

Football

NATIONAL SCOTCH CUP
NO RECORD
Glasgow v Aberdeen (8.0)

AVON WERSECK LEAGUE: Whitchurch United v Newton Heath Harlequins (7.30).

WYBRO LEAGUE: West Owlsiders Sunderland & Newcastle County (7.45) vs Darlinton City. Seacroft Ladies Middlesbrough City (8.15) vs Stranraer Town.

AVON CRISTALL COMBINATION First Division: Crystal Palace v Swanssea (2.0) (at Ploegh Lane).

FA YOUTH CUP Third round: Southend United v Walsley (4.45).

Other sports

BOWLE World Indoor Championships (Prescott):
World Bowls Dutch Professionals (Manchester).

POTBALL

DINWIDDIE SCOTTISH CLUB
PRO ROUND
Dinwiddie v Aberdeen (6.0)
AYRSON WESSLEX LEAGUE: Whitechurch Utd v
Morison Heath Harlequins (7.30).

WILTSHIRE LEAGUE: Fosse Division: Sunningdale
v Maidenhead (7.0) (on Durridge). Second
Division: Maidenhead City v Stroudbury Town
(8.0).

AVON INSURANCE COMMODORATE First Division
Crystal Palace v Swanton (2.0) (at Ploeghe
Lane).

FA YOUTH CUP Third round: Southend United
v Watford (7.45).

Other sports

BOWLING: World Indoor Championships (Pres-
ent). British Bowls Championship (Manchester).

INSURANCE CONSERVATION First Division Crystal Palace v Swansea (2.0) (at Plough).

YOUTH CUP Third round: Southend United 2-0 (7.45).

Other sports

HLS: World Indoor Championships (Pres.).

HSB: British Championships (Manchester).

100

[illegible]

YOUTH CUP Third round: Coventry City 1rammeh Rovers 1. Third-round replay: Chukam Rovers 2 Bury 0.

INTENTS LEAGUE Premier Division: Millwall Wednesday 0 Everton 0. First Division: Aston Villa 2 Port Vale 0. Second Division: Grimsby Town 1 Rotherham Utd 0.

INSURANCE COMBINATION First Division: Millwall 2 Wimbledon 1.

•

the council's support, is taking a special one-off meeting on 15 March to re-examine the situation. It is believed that an emergency management committee in charge last November was unconstitutional. "We want to ensure that everything is in order and cannot be challenged in the future," the committee's chairman Brian Cookson, said. "This is an exciting time for the sport with new opportunities opening up that we have been only a dream a few years ago."

Football

Blackburn Rovers have agreed to allow the highly rated 18-year-old England youth international defender, Marlon Brown, to join Swindon on a month's loan.

Norwich have signed the Tottenham central defender, Scott on a month's loan, the 30-year-old defender has just finished a month on loan at Cheltenham.

Ben Spinks 16 and Steven Neal

The former Arsenal and Portsmouth defender Roy Pack, 50, has been named as a director of AFC Bournemouth.

Guillermo Canedo, head of the organising committees for the 1970 and 1986 World Cups in Mexico and a Fifa vice president, died yesterday at the age of 66 after a long illness.

7

[illegible]

Rallying

MONTE CARLO RALLY Third day (after 12 timed stages): Overall positions: 1 T Malenon (Fm) Mitsubishi Lancer Str 9min 17sec; 2 P Lest (It) Subaru Impreza +24sec; 3 C Sainz (Sp) Ford Escort +27; 4 A Schwarz (Ger) Ford Escort +3min 33sec; 5 U Nittel (Ger) Mitsubishi Lancer +8:31.

Figure 1 is a line graph showing the percentage of the total sample for each age group across different years. The x-axis represents years from 1960 to 1990, and the y-axis represents the percentage of the total sample, ranging from 0 to 100. The age groups are: 0-14, 15-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65-74, and 75+. The graph shows a general trend of decreasing percentages for younger age groups and increasing percentages for older age groups over time.

Year	0-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
1960	25	15	15	15	15	10	5	5
1970	20	15	15	15	15	10	5	5
1980	15	15	15	15	15	10	5	5
1990	10	15	15	15	15	10	5	5

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ANDORRA	
Alba	Wet snow at lower levels
Grau Ràig	Wet lower down
AUSTRIA	
Kirchdorf	Best on Stangeplate
St. Jakob	Fresh snow high up
Lermoos	Hard base, powdery top cover
CANADA	
Timbuctoo	Firm granular
Whistler	Powder, groomed powder
FRANCE	
Courchevel	Upper slopes good
Flaine	Good conditions up top
La Clusaz	New snow on upper slopes
ITALY	
Corvara	Best on upper slopes
Cortina	Best at all levels
Folgaria	Good at all levels
SWITZERLAND	
Wengen	Upper slopes still good
Zermatt	Fresh and dry

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opportunity	snr	cas	cas	
100%	22.1	130	180	Snow burns
100%	22.1	130	180	Variable
80%	21.1	10	50	Cloudy, snow
70%	21.1	5	25	Cloudy, snow
100%	19.1	15	45	Snow shows
100%	17.1	40	65	Cloudy, snow
100%	21.1	255	255	Overcast
97%	22.1	100	140	Unsettled
55%	21.1	115	260	Variable
96%	22.1	50	250	Unsettled
100%	20.1	50	130	Unsettled
100%	20.1	70	2500	overcast, snow
100%	20.1	50	120	Variable, snow
100%	20.1	20	110	Cleaning
100%	21.1	60	290	Improvement

3



Never a Doull moment
Derek Pringle on New Zealand's
opening bowler, page 24

sport

Hard man of the ring
Ken Jones talks to Mike Tyson's
new trainer, page 24



Billionaire invests £40m in Rangers

Football

NICK DUXBURY
AND MAGNUS GRIMOND

The biggest single investment in British football yesterday saw the eighth-richest man in Britain plough £40m into Rangers.

The Bahamas-based Joe Lewis, who has a £1bn fortune, has bought a 25 per cent stake to help launch the Glasgow club towards the new millennium and a place in the European Super League that everyone agrees is just around the corner.

The Rangers chairman, David Murray, retains a controlling interest, but has diluted his holding from 82 to 61 per cent, with the £40m to go towards strengthening the team,

the building of a hotel and leisure complex at Ibrox and a training ground.

The 59-year-old Lewis, an enthusiastic gambler who shuns publicity, bases himself in a £15m mansion in the Bahamas, but also moves between homes in Florida, Buenos Aires and London. Apart from what is said to be a fondness for betting on American football, he is not known to be a sports fan.

In the last few years he has emerged as a large investor in the London art market, building up a 29 per cent stake in Christie's International, the auctioneers.

The genesis of his fortune was a restaurant business built up by his father, which included the Hanover Grand, a chain of

banqueting suites and a number of themed restaurants, such as The Beefeater.

The announcement took the value of Rangers soaring to a reputed £160m, with the club looking to follow Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur on to the Stock Market before the end of the century.

"I have consistently stated that I do not believe it is appropriate to float Rangers until the uncertainties arising from Bosman, pay-per-view television and the expansion of European club competitions are resolved," Murray said.

"I am delighted to have raised £40m of new capital from a single investor at this time, providing us with the financial strength to develop the club further while these changes take effect. I believe that Rangers is now in a much stronger position to realise our ambitions for footballing and commercial success."

Murray bought control of Rangers for around £6.5m in 1988 and has seen the team win the Scottish championship every season since. In the year to May 31, 1996, Rangers achieved a turnover in excess of £30m and a profit of £7.1m.

While the haves were celebrating, the have-nots in the form of Millwall were reassuring their following that £10m of debt was not about to send the club to the wall.

The Second Division club, who are also losing £250,000 a month, suspended their shares on Tuesday but the chairman, Peter Mead, said: "Let me reassure our fans that Millwall will be playing here when my son is wheeling me in and handing me my Zimmer frame. This is a major institution that will come out of this stronger than ever."

David Buchler, of administrators Buchler Phillips, said: "As of today the company is in administration," he said. "It is therefore possible to have meaningful discussions with bankers to put the club's finances on a stronger footing."

"There is a tough road ahead, a lot of work to be done and we are going to try and do that the best we can and in the shortest possible time."

Bristol City will play the rest of the season under the threat of a two-point deduction after an FA disciplinary commission found the club guilty of a charge of failing to control spectators during the home derby against Bristol Rovers last month.

Pearce to stay at Forest helm

RUPERT METCALF

Stuart Pearce has agreed to stay in charge at Nottingham Forest for the rest of the season. The 34-year-old England full-back has hinted that he would like the job on a full-time basis - but he is aware that his future will not be settled before the club's extraordinary general meeting next month.

Since Pearce became caretaker player-manager after the departure of Frank Clark, Forest have taken 13 out of 18 points to move out of the Premiership relegation zone. "Stuart has agreed to stay with us until the end of the season," Irving Korn, the Forest chairman, said after talks with Pearce yesterday, "but the long-term situation hinges on the takeover."

The various takeover offers on the table will be considered by the club's 203 shareholders at the EGM on 24 February. "We'll have to wait until the new owners come in and then sit down and start further talks," Korn added, after hearing what Pearce wants from the club if he is to continue as manager. "We've had preliminary talks, which have gone well, and I will put Stuart's proposals to the board on Friday," Pearce left the City Ground without comment.

West Bromwich Albion have dismissed their manager, Alan

Buckley. He had been in charge at The Hawthorns since October 1994, after six years as manager of Grimsby Town.

Albion, 17th in the First Division, have won only seven League games this season. Buckley had been warned by the chairman, Tony Hale, that results had to improve following the club's stock market flotation. Arthur Mann, Buckley's assistant, becomes caretaker manager. He will be aided by the coach, John Trewick.

Stoke City have turned down a £2.1m offer from their First Division rivals, Queen's Park Rangers, for their top scorer, Mike Sheron. Crystal Palace have completed the signing of the 34-year-old Arsenal defender Andy Linighan for an undisclosed fee.

Bruce Grobbelaar, the Plymouth Argyle goalkeeper who is on trial at Winchester Crown Court on match-fixing charges, has been given permission by the judge presiding over the case to fly to Harare this weekend to play for Zimbabwe against Ghana in an African Nations' Cup qualifier. He is due to leave London tonight.

Reports in the Netherlands suggest that Morten Olsen, the former Danish international defender and coach at Brondby and FC Cologne, is to succeed Louis van Gaal as the Ajax coach this summer.



Pete Sampras plays a 'slam-dunk' smash on his way to his quarter-final win in five sets over Albert Costa yesterday

Photograph: Tony Marshall/Emphasis

Sampras survives to face 'war' with Muster

Tennis

DERRICK WHYTE
reports from Melbourne

Pete Sampras showed his customary composure in the Australian Open here yesterday to overcome two fightbacks by Albert Costa, of Spain, and set up a singles semi-final to savour tomorrow against Austria's Thomas Muster.

The world No 1, winner of eight Grand Slam titles, fought out a tense five-set match with Costa who stormed around the court, chasing every ball and conjuring up impossible shots to keep the top seed on the back foot.

Each time Sampras took a set lead, the 11th seed fought back but he could not prevent the American storming through at the end to win 6-3, 6-7, 6-1, 3-6, 6-2. Sampras kept his cool in the closing stages, his serve leading the way. He sent down 23 aces in the match and won almost all his first-service points.

"He's fast, he's good. He's got one of the best backhands I've ever seen," Sampras said of Costa. "On the run, I couldn't believe some of the shots he was getting. Now I've got one day off and then it will be Thomas, which will be a war. We've played each other a number of times and I know what to expect, and he knows what to expect."

Britain's David Sherwood made up for the defeat of his doubles partner James Trotman in the Australian Junior Open yesterday by defeating Israel's Kobi Ziv to reach the third round. Sherwood, 16, from Sheffield, won 4-6, 7-6, 6-4 in the boys' singles in Melbourne, where he and Trotman are in contention for the doubles title.

Sherwood's success follows his recent rise to 29th place in the world under-18 rankings.

Earlier Trotman, ranked 22 and seeded 13 in Melbourne, had

been beaten in straight sets 6-4, 6-2 by the Croat Luka Katanjac.

It was a far cry from his heroic earlier in the week when the 17-year-old from Ipswich overcame the heat to oust the Australian Nathan Healey in a three-and-a-half-hour match.

body was laughing. Mentally, it just helps you sometimes if you do something else and not just tennis all the time."

Past gymnastics experience helped her roll safely on the grass after she went flying over the horse's head. Then she climbed back on and continued her ride. "I was jumping and the horse didn't jump, and I jumped by myself," said Hingis, explaining her faulty timing, before adding that she will not do any more riding during the tournament, but only because there is not enough time.

There was heartbreak for Belgium's Dominique van Roost, who handed the 14th-seeded American, Mary Joe Fernandez, her first Grand Slam semi-final in four years when she retired hurt in the second set because of a pulled abdominal muscle.

It was a sad end to Belgium's best Grand Slam performance following the defeat of the 16th seed, Sabine Appelmans, on Tuesday. Van Roost said: "A lot of people think Belgium is French. Sometimes you cannot even see the country on the map. I think now they know more about Belgium from the tennis."

Both women's semi-finals take place today, before the first men's semi-final between the world No 2, Michael Chang, and Spain's Carlos Moya.

Results, Digest, page 25

Good-bye battery



Welcome to the future: Seiko Kinetic®, the first quartz watch that turns your movement into power. Every move you make is converted into electrical impulses by a tiny built-in powerhouse. Ecological, reliable and efficient: wear it one day to gain energy for at least two weeks. Wear it daily - it will run continually. Made of titanium: light, yet strong and kind to your skin. 20 bar water resistant. One-way rotating bezel and screw lock crown. Seiko Kinetic - it's built to last. Someday all watches will be made this way.

**SEIKO
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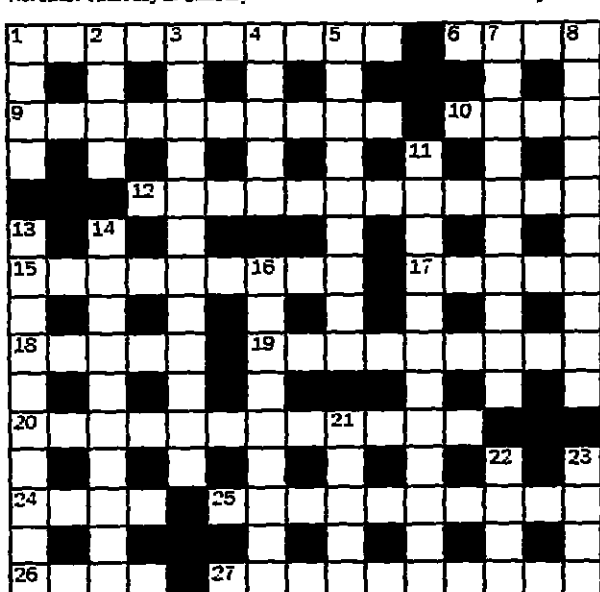
Seiko Kinetic at: <http://www.seiko-corp.co.jp>

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 2202, Thursday 23 January

By Mass

Wednesday's Solution



HASTEN ALEBENCH
A H A L E R O E
YORKSHIRE AORTA
F U E N G S E C U
E B B S E N T H I A S T
V B M E E B
E L E M E N T S P O N C E
R R S U H E
B E Y W O R D R I M I N G
C I E A B C U
A C C O U N T I N G F O L D
S U T A N G L I
B E E C H I N E E S T A T E
A E L L P C T I V
H S P O S I T I O N G I E T E C

- ACROSS**
- They usually get a look-in (10)
 - Long dial tone, initially (4)
 - Hitting back's having an effect, capturing Queen (10)
 - Mass of fish causing stir about river (4)
 - Word ultimately applied to blue parties, maybe? (12)
 - Medium wine ten mixed with half of beer (2,7)
 - Taken from Board School, we hear? (5)
 - Bitter disappointment (5)
 - Cuts round old city with quiet ecclesiastical properties (9)
- DOWN**
- Most nuts can't resist this (6-6)
 - Pole's short enough to carry (4)
 - Dad's locked out! Broke in (10)
 - Mould in shed (4)
 - Declare a floating asset, always entered (10)
 - Scottish isle's recorded rain? (4)
 - Push for Unionist in drink (4)
 - A co-student I'd coached, left behind (12)
 - Dread losing top and slip (5)
 - It could be applied to one full of beans (3-6)

- Exercises including a jet's final loop-the-loop etc (10)
- Offer cape for warmth (10)
- National idiosyncrasy? (12)
- Made endless politic manoeuvres, being thus (10)
- Feels nausea? Seaman sways, losing head (10)
- One in SW Trades phoned from NY to UK (9)
- Result? Make certain right away (5)
- Region - sherpa's, I assume, in part (4)
- Tool given commercials on radio? (4)